



Listening and Contributing

You'll no doubt be aware of talk that some members believe we're developing a 'them and us' culture. Sometimes this is expressed as disappointment that not more members have volunteered for (particularly) fundraising opportunities; sometimes it's suggested that Committee members aren't talking through issues with other members or listening to their views. What isn't so clear is why these perceptions have developed. The committee are very aware that every single member is important to the charity and that one way forward has to be that we can all improve our listening and communication.

We use our Forum and Facebook - well, some of us do - and we've also started using more group emails following the suggestion made at the A.G.M. We have this newsletter and regular Open Meetings - the next one is to take place on *Thursday 12 December*. We can, and do, talk between ourselves whenever we meet in whatever setting. In addition, the Committee have now agreed that one of its members (Gary initially) will spend time every month just being available for members to drop by and talk.

So how can we improve things, whilst also making sure some people aren't asked to take on ridiculous workloads? Over to you! As the chair of NBB, I've written most of these Newsletters but have received little feedback. Please contact me on chair@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk to contribute your own suggestions and reactions. If, like me, you'd prefer to talk, email me your phone number and I'll ring.

If you have issues that you think need raising then please speak up.

It's been (Another) Busy Month!

Promotional and fundraising activities have continued at a hectic pace but a lot of time this month has also gone into the preparations for our limited 'go live' on 15th October.

Gary Annan and others have been working hard to get the temporary rider and controller rota systems sorted, whilst Martin Price continues to develop the comprehensive web based system for when we go live with our local hospitals. *Many thanks to those who have been putting their names down for either - or both - rotas.* Questions and feedback to the Committee members about all this have helped to clarify issues and made us realise that there are always more issues to sort than you originally thought!

One of the obvious issues has been obtaining the Hi-Vis Jackets which will contribute towards giving our riders a professional look. NABB had said that they would subsidise jackets if they were purchased from the supplier they were working with. However this arrangement has still not been finalised. Barry Bullas had sourced a higher quality but more expensive jacket which he showed at the AGM. We had hoped to get sponsorship to cover part of the cost. This has not proven possible before our 15th October 'go live' so the Committee has agreed a proposal to put to the membership i.e. that we should initially buy 30 jackets at approx. £65 each. These would be allocated to individual

members (on payment of a deposit) on the basis that they be returned when membership / riding for the group ceased and the deposit refunded.

Publicity and Fundraising



We received an unexpected but very welcome cheque from the William Leech Foundation for £1,000 - Hazel Askins-Hicklin has been spending a lot of time approaching such Trusts; let's hope more cheques will be forthcoming as a result of her efforts.

On the subject of cheques, MG Owners Northumbria have now presented us with the promised cheque for the fabulous sum of £8,600; their generosity has really blown us away. To avoid potential "donor fatigue" amongst the membership, Peter (that's me!) didn't ask for members support for his own sponsored walk around Anglesey. Some members contributed anyway and many thanks to them; just under £1,500 was raised.



The collections at Morrison's in Morpeth on 11th and 12th October raised the amazing sum of £785.20 - well done to those who collected and, of course, 'thank you' to those who contributed. It's a really good experience getting such positive feedback from the public!

We don't have any detail at present, but Richard Scholfield has recently heard that we have been selected as the "charity of the half year" for the American Express Newcastle office. We'll let you know when we hear more

We also have the opportunity to win funding of up to £3000 from Lloyds Banking Group, through their Community Funding Scheme. We've been shortlisted and there is now a public vote to decide which organisations in the North of England receive this funding. Voting closes November 1st: You, your friends and family can vote via the web link below, via text or both!

Via the web: [https://communityfund.lloydsbank.com/vo ... DAF6BABFBC](https://communityfund.lloydsbank.com/vo...DAF6BABFBC)



Or text **"VOTE MBQD"** to **61119**.

Only one SMS vote per phone number. Texts will be charged at your mobile network provider's standard rate.

LLOYDS BANKING GROUP
COMMUNITY FUND

Following a presentation to the local Harley-Davidson club, we've received a last minute invitation to the "NE66" event at Alnwick Garden on 19th October, drop by if you're in the area - or make the trip specially. The event includes custom bike art, tattoo art and rider fashion, classic American Diner food, live music, competitions (including an air guitar competition) and silly games with prizes also special screenings of 'Easy Rider' and 'The Wild One' for just £3. The bar will be open from 6pm-late, and of course there will be lots of shiny Harleys!!

For those of you in the Durham area we'll be collecting in Sainsbury's there on 29th Nov.

A New Bike



Most of you will know that we are planning to get one new bike as soon as possible. The amazing generosity of MG Northumbria means that we can spend more on this bike than on our RT. Possibilities for a new bike were discussed - including on the Forum - and we talked to Triumph NE regarding a new Trophy. Given the cost of a suitable new bike and to avoid the considerable instant depreciation, the Committee decided on balance that it would be best to get a used one. Bike Manager Richard is now actively seeking out a bike and may be approaching members who have particular knowledge that can help with the selection.

Riding For Northumbria Blood Bikes

We've had yet more members go through advanced training and our own assessments - thank you to them and well done! Our first Blue Light training has been held and went well; further sessions are planned. Our finalised Members Handbook, Riders' Brief and

Controllers' Brief are now available. The Committee discussed the RoSPA test and agreed that Gold and Silver are the equivalent of an IAM test pass; therefore, those should be the levels that we would regard as 'advanced'.

Other Issues

Some people may not be aware that the Committee has decided to do away with membership fees. This fee was originally introduced to support us in registering for VAT and consequently be able to benefit from reclaiming VAT on expenditure; however this registration proved impossible. The membership fee raises comparatively little income and creates administrative work - and also members are being asked to pay for other items to ride for the group! It was agreed that all those who have paid for the 2013/2014 year would be able to reclaim their money, or they could "convert" the payment into a donation. Contact Barry Bullas if you want to discuss this (membership@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk).



We had a very positive Meeting with the NE Region Pathology Managers on 1 October. Everyone there was supportive, particularly the manager from the only NHS Hospital Trust we haven't already been in discussion with (Durham and Darlington); he happened to be Chairing the meeting - and also happens to ride an R1!

It was agreed that we would send him a copy of our training programme for the carriage of dangerous goods and UN3373 compliance. As a regional group, they would suggest any amendments needed to make it acceptable to all the hospitals in the North East. It was also agreed that we would need more discussions with all of 'our' Hospital Trusts following this meeting. Richard and Peter are leading on this.

Finally: don't forget the **Social Evening on 16th November**. Raffle / auction prizes have been coming in from businesses and via members - many thanks to all of them!

Tickets are available from Richard (Richard.Scholfield@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk) at £10 each.

FUNDRAISING HOTLINE: 07766 479 770 - for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...



www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk



facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes

twitter.com/northumbriabb

linkedin.com/company/2866951

Providing effective and timely transportation of essential blood and medical products
Registered Charity Number 1152745