



# NORTHUMBRIA BLOOD BIKES

September  
2015

-Please feel free to print,  
copy, save or forward this  
newsletter to increase  
awareness of our charity!



# #BLOODBIKEDAY

RAISING AWARENESS FOR THE 1500 VOLUNTEERS

UP AND DOWN THE COUNTRY WHO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE FOR FREE

FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST 2015

“National Blood Bike Awareness Day” was created by Northumbria Blood Bikes fundraiser Graham Moor, and was an astounding success both in our region and across the country. This month's newsletter shows the various activities we engaged in locally, and the media attention that was gained from the event...

# “Just a few Bikes riding around at night time?”

On the pages this month (and listed below) you'll get an idea of just how much work our volunteers undertake each and every month to make sure there's petrol in the fuel tanks, insurance, uniforms etc.

Please consider joining us at one of our events to keep this fantastic momentum going... We really do rely on these fundraisers for the very survival of our charity.

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This has been the first newsletter where we were unable to cover all of the events of the previous four weeks..... Alan Ross, who compiles the newsletters, was away for three weeks this month, so it's been a bit of a rush to bring it up to date & get it published, and one or two stories / features had to be missed out.

We're currently looking for anyone with an editorial flair to assist in creating the newsletters... and it's not too complicated: Stories are created in Microsoft Word, and the information is gathered from Facebook, Twitter, our website and our events calendar. What we lack is a good wordsmith to convert reports into a “good read”. If you fancy seeing your creativity in our newsletters, please see the advert on page 17 of this newsletter and get in touch! We'd start you off with a couple of stories to report on, and increase to a few pages if you're enjoying it...

If you're involved in any events, or instrumental in arranging any donations, presentations, sponsorship, talks or publicity, please remember to make us aware to ensure that it is included in the Newsletter, and shared with the companies or organisations involved. You can do this by contacting Alan Ross ([alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk](mailto:alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk)). If including any photos, please identify the people photographed so that we can include the image in a news feature!





## The Association of Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain & Ireland



On 12 August, Steve Rawlings & Peter Robertson took Blood Bike "Bella" to meet the ladies of Tynemouth Inner Wheel at Whitley Bay Golf Club. The meeting began with a lovely meal before the ladies became the first audience to see and hear our new powerpoint presentation. It seemed to go down well as they generously gave us a cheque & held an impromptu collection! Many of the ladies then couldn't resist coming to look at Bella, and try her for size, even though it was completely dark by then. Thanks for a great night!

*Photo/Story: Peter Robertson*

## Annfield Plain CC

### Family Fun Day

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August we were at Annfield Plain Cricket Club for their Family Funday, with plenty of activities including inflatables, birds of prey, free dog micro chipping and bike marking, and stalls & games too.

Debbie Todd and Wilf Moralee attended, and brought "Lindisfarne", one of our two liveried Yamaha FJR Motorcycles. They would have been joined by one of the duty bikes, too, but demand was high and they were kept busy all day!

*Photo/Story: Debbie Todd*





# NATIONAL BLOOD BIKES AWARENESS DAY

The very first National Awareness Day for Blood Bikes, devised and arranged by our very own Mr. Graham Moor. As the originators of the idea, the focus was on our group to set an example to others... Here's what we did:



**Newcastle Royal Victoria Infirmary**, one of our busiest locations for deliveries and collections, was the focus in Newcastle City centre. We moved the Quayside event here due to bad weather, so had several bikes to show, and a presence inside the reception. Pictured (Left to right) Gary Annan, Geoff Spencer, Bob Jarman (Patron), Sean Storey, Richard Penna. Several other volunteers also helped throughout the day to publicise the charity, and the location was used as the focal point for a television news feature that broadcasted the same evening on local channel "Made in Tyne and Wear".



As the day drew to a close, duty crew Johnny Kerr and Barry Bullas (left) posted this photo to show that we were "still there", and illustrating that our service continues as always. At this time (midnight) they had already completed 6 deliveries to 5 hospitals, as well as refreshing the blood supplies for the Great North Air Ambulance Helicopters. Cheer up Johnny, just 7 hours to go!



## Northumberland Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (NSECH) Cramlington:

Using a very similar set-up as we did at the RVI, but this time with one of our two Yamaha FJR1300 bikes, “Lindisfarne”. Pictured on “Lindisfarne” is Cori Redshaw, and next to Cori is NBB volunteer Dave Lucas, who, with the help of Matt Dinnery, staffed the publicity & awareness stand inside this brand new hospital.

NSECH is rapidly becoming one of our most frequent hospitals for deliveries and collections, but it’s brand new, so it was worth having a stand there just to make the staff aware of us, let alone the public!

We also had displays at Darlington Memorial Hospital and the Freeman Hospital in Gosforth. The weather was terrible, but thankfully we were lucky enough to be offered some indoor space at each location. There was also huge support at national level, with a mention from Chris Evans on BBC Radio 2, and numerous competitions and promotional offerings from O2 (the telecoms company is in partnership with NABB, the Nationwide Association of Blood Bikes).

Other groups around the country took part in their own events, and there were stories and case-studies “my life as a blood biker” exchanged on social media.

Our Chairman, Peter Robertson, and Membership Office Barry Bullas were interviewed by local television, resulting in a three-minute feature on the regional evening news. The video is available on our facebook site if you missed it.

## So... was it worth it?

-Yes, absolutely! We had a larger number of enquiries than any campaign we’ve held previously, gained several new members and even managed to enhance our relationships with the various NHS hospitals & trusts we serve.

More importantly, we got our name out to the public, increased awareness, and showed ourselves to be part of a truly national, professional organisation. Well done everyone...Roll on next year!!!



Together with







## ASDA Benton 22<sup>nd</sup> August

A damp start to our weekend greeted NBB volunteers staffing our stand at ASDA Benton, but thankfully it didn't deter any of the customers from visiting the store: We raised an impressive £294.16 from the event.

This was the first fundraising event for new NBB volunteer Gary Saunders, who joined Kirsty Downham and Holly Hope-Hume to ensure its success. Thanks to all of you, and also Nigel, Graham and several other members who also attended during the course of the day.... It's good to see events so well supported!

## Our Annual General Meeting Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

A very productive meeting was held at the University of Northumbria, with over 45 people in attendance!

Apart from the obligatory formal stuff (election of posts, changes to constitution etc), there was a good question & answer session which gave members the opportunity to raise any concerns & issues and help us to progress in the right direction!



It was a pleasant surprise to see so many new faces attending the AGM this year... a sign, perhaps, of the success of our recent Awareness Day in recruiting new volunteers.

Sadly our guest speaker, Dr. Rachel Hawes from the Great North Air Ambulance, was unable to attend, but no doubt we will see her at a future meeting. She did provide us with some update information about the performance of the Blood on Board service which was read out by Sean Storey, our Hospital Liaison representative.

Once the formal section of the meeting was completed, there was a brief video reviewing the various activities we have been involved with over the previous 90 days.... Primarily to emphasise to newcomers just how much effort is required to keep money in the bank to meet our operating costs. The Chairman, Peter Robertson then opened the floor for questions which flooded in! One of the issues raised was regarding a high-viz jacket option for car drivers which the team have subsequently agreed is a valid issue and are making the required changes for this to happen.

It was a great opportunity to meet up and talk to other members, compare stories and catch up on activities. We set out our aims & objectives for the next financial year, too.... Now we have the unenviable task of making sure we stick to the objectives we stated and turn them into a reality!

The review document, which details both our performance for the last year and our plans for the year ahead, is posted on our website (under "Newsletters") for all to see/download - no login required.





# Bedlington Town Fair

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August

A big "Thank You" to Northumbria Blood Bike Volunteers Kirsty Downham and Dave Lucas, who represented us at the town fair.

Some 2,500 visitors enjoyed fun in the sun in South East Northumberland at Bedlington's Big Event... and the town's biggest annual family fun day enjoyed a record-breaking year.

The Big Event, organised by local charity Leading Link, took place for the third time at Attlee Park in the town, and Northumbria Blood Bikes were there with a bike and a mini-moto to spread the word about our charity and our life-saving service.



The day saw the refurbished bandstand at Attlee Park, the result of a £60,000 funding award from SITA Trust, used for the first time and being officially opened by Ian Lavery MP.

As well as fun fair rides, a BBQ and games including Beat the Goalie, the event also saw the final of Northumberland's Got Talent.

We even had a visit from the Disney princesses and a big fairy! (Left.....No... look higher up!)

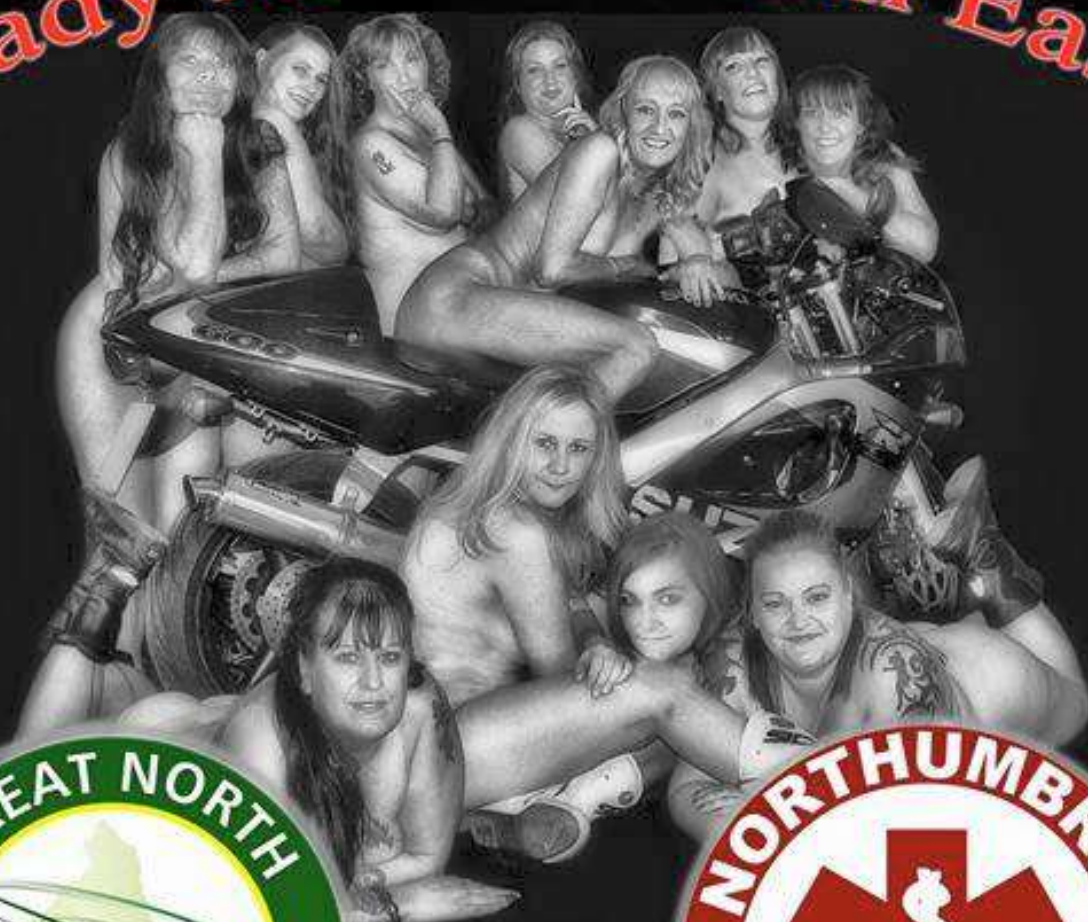
## Lady Bikers North East

...have created an amazing calendar to raise funds for both Northumbria Blood Bikes and the Great North Air Ambulance... and it will be available to buy from 5<sup>th</sup> October at a variety of locations. Now, here's the catch... There are so many locations that it would take me ages to write them all out for you, and the writing on their official poster is a little too small, so I'd have to dedicate an entire page to the poster in order for you to read it easily. That's my official explanation, and it has nothing to do with the fact that there just so happens to be eleven naked women on the poster. Honest. Please support the two charities by purchasing this amazing calendar at any of the venues listed. How lucky we are to have fundraisers like this helping us! Now, who's going to help me to explain to my wife... (see next page...)

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# Lady Bikers North East



**Real Women**

**Real Bikers**

*Available at the following venues*

Monday 5th October The Crown Bike Night, Redcar  
Tuesday 6th October The Pitstop Diner, Stockton  
Wednesday 7th October Wetlands Bike Night, Washington  
Thursday 8th October The Roadhouse Grill, Tyneside Auto Park, Gosforth  
Monday 12th October The Crown Bike Night, Redcar  
Tuesday 13th October The Junction Bike Meet, Widdrington Station  
Wednesday 14th October The Golden Lion, St Johns Chapel, Weardale  
Thursday 15th October the Whistle Stop Cafe, Whitby  
Monday 19th October The Crown Bike Night, Redcar  
Tuesday 20th October The Pitstop Diner, Stockton  
Wednesday 21st October Zetlands Bike Meet, Royal Quays Marina  
Thursday 22nd October Morpeth Market Place bike meet, Northumberland

## Charity Calendar



# Storming the Castle!

Saturday / Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> September



Stormin' The Castle is a bikers rally held at Witton Castle, and which this year celebrated its 25th year. Whilst run independently and voluntarily, is one of the main fund raising events for the Motorcycle Action Group and over the last 24 years has been a major donor to support the ongoing fight for rider's rights. The rally is one of the biggest biker rallies in the UK, and entertainment is spread across 2 stages, Main stage, and the smaller Iris tent.

We owe a massive thank you to the organisers and all the amazing people who took the time to chat with us and donate to our cause. In one (long) day we raised a massive £1,008.22 which goes a long way towards our costs and we hopefully have a few new volunteers, too! Thanks also to our NBB volunteers who represented us at the event, including Anthony Sim and Debbie Todd who were both there for the duration. Put your feet up, you two, you deserve a well-earned rest!

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# We're asking for your help again:



Right the way through 'till the end of October, we're asking you to help us out if you're in Eldon Square. For these three months we are competing with two other charities in the John Lewis Community Matters "green token scheme", from which we should get a share of £3,000. The more tokens we have, the larger a percentage of the fund will be awarded to us. We're therefore asking that you choose the John Lewis store for your meeting place / coffee-break, hoping you'll go to the cafe there and put your token in our 'bin'. Community Matters is the John Lewis charitable giving scheme that runs throughout their shops... You'll also come across a similar scheme at your local Waitrose.



Every 3 months, each shop selects 3 community groups to help. Customers will then be directly involved in deciding how much each nominated group receives, by using a token to vote for the organisation they'd like to support. Each shop will have £3000 to donate which will be split between the charities according to the proportion of the vote they've received from customers. This means that if a charity receives 31% of the votes, it'll receive a £910 donation.



The Community Matters boxes will be located in catering areas of their Eldon Square store. Customers will be given one token per transaction, and will be able to follow how much of the vote each organisation receives over the 3 months. Please show your support for us when you're in Newcastle.... We have three months... so we'll probably arrange some ride-outs & coffee mornings to include a trip to John Lewis, too!



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# A “Great” North Run indeed!

This year we had 11 amazing people who took part in the Great North Run to raise funds for Northumbria Blood Bikes. Based on what has been raised and pledged so far they are collectively going to have raised over £6,000. That is a huge effort and we can't thank them enough!

Left to right in the above picture we have Gareth Wilson, Kirsty Lawrence, Steven Copeland, Claire Richardson, Martin Armstrong, Pamela Wilson, Clair Gray and Claire Wilkie. Below left: Emily Gallone & Carl Slack. Also running was Alison Conway, who unfortunately managed to evade our cameras!



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Three of our runners, Clair Gray, Claire Wilkie and Kirstie Lawrence, managed a double-win before the run had even started: They seized the opportunity of a photo-shoot (left) with the one & only Mo Farah! (who went on to be the first over the finish line). They also managed to be interviewed by BBC television, and promoted our cause live on national TV. Within minutes, Social media sites were twittering positive feedback about it: There was good feedback from John McCombe (Chairman of SERV Blood Bikes (Herts & Beds), and Bill Bertham, Chairman of Blood Bikes

Equally important was our support team who hosted the cheering station on John Reid Road outside South Tyneside General Hospital; Gary Annan, Kirsty Downham and Stephen Hodgson, pictured on the previous page in front of our gazebo. Thanks also to Barry Bullas who took photographs for us at multiple locations around the event, and to Gary Saunders (right), who was part of the motorcycle support team, and still managed to get a Northumbria sticker on the front of his bike!

Thank you to all of you..... and of course the unseen volunteers who were still working behind the scenes, on duty bikes & shift control, to ensure that the hospitals received their blood & samples as usual. No doubt some of us relaxed afterwards, but not for long: The very next day I had an email in my inbox from fundraising guru Graham Moor, entitled "Great North Run Next Year".... Does he ever stop???





# Charity Night

raising funds for



&



Lee Robson  
Patient Grant  
Charity Number  
1105891

Charity  
Number  
1152745

**23rd October 2015**  
**The Derwent Manor Hotel**

**7pm - 1am** arrival for 7pm

3 Course Meal, Raffle,  
Music By Ellie Rae, DJ Disco

**£20 per person**  
**Table of 10 for £180**

**For Tickets contact**

**Clair 07539021425/Kirsty 07849830467**

# Heidi takes to the road with Sean:

*Thursday 10th September*

Heidi Mottram OBE, Chief Executive Officer of Northumbrian Water, is one of the three Patrons we have at Northumbrian Water. She recently said that she'd like to experience first-hand what it's like to be a Blood Biker. Naturally, she's not able to jump onto a motorcycle as she has no licence, but our regular Blood on Board run was ideal for her to see what we do.

Sean Storey met Heidi and took her through the entire process from collecting at the RVI, exchanging boxes at Low Row, to the RVI again, then Durham Tees Valley Airport and back a third time to the RVI.

It was a great opportunity to show her the amount of work we do every night, free of charge around our region. Each visit to the RVI also created the opportunity to meet the North/South duty riders as they attended to the ad-hoc deliveries we were receiving throughout the evening.

Thank you, Heidi...Your willingness to join us for a shift gave us all a clear indication of your commitment to our group as a patron, and hopefully left you with a greater understanding of exactly what "volunteering as a blood biker" really involves!



## Going off on a tangent:

7<sup>th</sup> September: Northumbria Blood Bikes spent a couple of hours with the ladies from Whitley Bay Tangent club, pictured left with "Auckland", one of our Honda Pan European bikes. This was followed by an informative talk from Steve Rawlings...one of his first talks... about the way in which we operate.

These talks are a vital link to publicise the charity, and often lead to opportunities for fundraising, or direct donations. Please let us know if you are aware of any clubs or groups who would like us to come along for a talk!



# “Scott” joins Northumbria Blood Bikes:

Those of you who've been following these newsletters for a while may recall an article we ran back in September 2014 about Scott Soulsby, pictured below, who had died a month earlier when his Kawasaki motorbike collided with a van between Ebchester and Stocksfield. Scott knew all about Northumbria Blood Bikes and had previously told his family of his intentions to join our group.

At the funeral, his wife Mandy asked people to make donations to Northumbria Blood Bikes on Scott's behalf instead of floral tributes.



Shortly afterwards, we wrote to Mandy, saying “Scott would have been welcomed as a member of our charity, and we will ensure that the funds collected in his honour will be used appropriately to further our potentially life-saving service”. So it's with great pleasure that we can unveil our newest addition to the blood bike fleet, a brand new Honda ST1300 Pan European, named “Scott”. Still in need of a blood-box rack, blue lights, sat-nav etc, but it will be on active duty in the next few weeks.

We took the newly-named bike along so that his wife Mandy and her children, Molly and Jack, could be the first to see it in its new hi-viz livery... and they were delighted.



Mandy told us “We are very honoured and proud to have a blood bike named after Scott and we would like to offer our thanks to virgin money and Northumbria blood bikes for the continued fund raising and great work. He would have been over the moon!”. “Scott” will shortly be delivering life-saving blood in our region for many years to come.



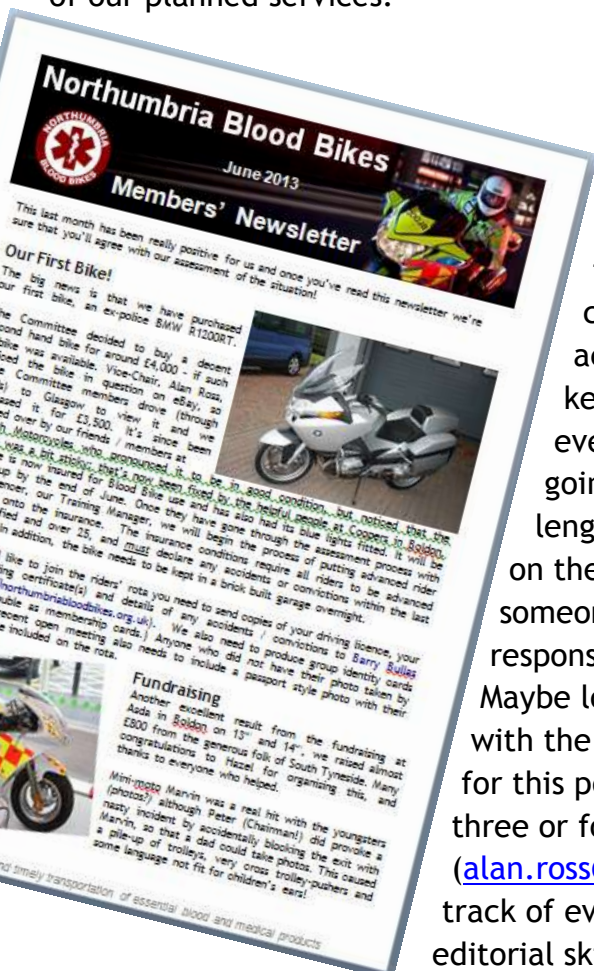
*(Pictures published with parental consent)*

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**"This Newsletter is okay, but given the chance I reckon I could do it better myself!"**

We're kinda hoping that someone, somewhere is saying that about this monthly newsletter. In the early days of Northumbria Blood Bikes the newsetter was a two or three page summary of activities, primarily aimed at reassuring our members that we were actually doing a lot of work in the background, despite little obvious progress with the start of our planned services.



Times have changed, though...and the newsletter has moved on too. Nowadays it is shared to a much wider audience, particularly to those who have helped or supported us, so that we can use it to acknowledge and convey our thanks to them. The power of social media means that we can spread the word of our charity to new audiences by "tagging" the companies and events that have been involved with us. This also acts as a constant reminder to other organisations and hopefully keeps Northumbria Blood Bikes fresh in their minds for future events, funding opportunities and more. There are so many events going on every month that the newsletter is reaching 18-20 pages in length...and becoming a bit of a beast for just one person to manage on their own. Alan Ross, the Vice Chairman, is looking to see if someone would be interested in taking on some or all of the responsibilities for preparing and creating this monthly publication. Maybe looking at a small cluster of events and stories to begin with, with the ultimate aim to find a new editor and hand over responsibility for this powerful publicity tool. If you fancy a go, maybe taking care of three or four pages for next month, contact Alan by sending an email ([alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk](mailto:alan.ross@northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk)). It's not an easy task keeping track of everything the charity does, but it's rewarding to see your editorial skills being distributed to the wider audience every month!

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# FUTURE EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY:

Lots of things happening, and we need your help to support them! If you can help, even if only for a couple of hours, please contact us....information is at the bottom of this page. NBB members can register their attendance for most of these events on our website (login required).



**ASDA, South Shields** 09:00 - 17:00 (Sat), 10:00-16:00 (Sun)  
A busy location, please spare us some of your time if you can.  
...or lose yourself in Motorcycles while your partner shops!

**ASDA**



**Northumbria Blood Bikes Charity Night** 19:00-01:00  
Organised by the legendary Kirsty Lawrence & Clair Gray....  
-So you know it will be a brilliant night! See page 13 for more info.



**ASDA, Ryhope, Sunderland** 09:00 - 17:00 (Sat), 10:00-16:00 (Sun)  
A busy location, please spare us some of your time if you can.  
...or lose yourself in Motorcycles while your partner shops!

**ASDA**

## -Hang on.. you're kidding, right?

After months and months of fundraising events, there's only two Asda collections, and that's it??? Well, yes, kind of.... We have other events taking place i.e. talks, presentations etc, but they only require 1-2 people and are already staffed.

The summer has been filled with events, festivals, fairs, open days, fun runs, awareness events, and we've grabbed every opportunity. It's harder to fundraise in the Autumn and Winter months, partly because there are less public events arranged, but it's also harder to get volunteers! Remember, the few events that we do stage will be big ones...Christmas shopping weeks are just around the corner and we have the potential to raise much larger amounts at supermarkets than we would in the summertime. So please help us to keep the money coming in so that we can maintain our service. Also, keep an eye on our Facebook & Twitter pages, and the "Events" page on our website; we often get last-minute opportunities and will be grateful for all the help we can get at short notice!

That's it for this months' newsletter, thanks for reading, and ride safe.....



[www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk](http://www.northumbriabloodbikes.org.uk)

[facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes](https://facebook.com/northumbriabloodbikes)

[twitter.com/northumbriabb](https://twitter.com/northumbriabb)

[linkedin.com/company/2866951](https://linkedin.com/company/2866951)

**FUNDRAISING HOTLINE:**

**07766 479 770**

- for any opportunities to increase our funding through sponsorship, locations for collecting tins, supermarket events etc...