

At the June meeting of the WI Paul Stothard told us about the role of blood bikers.

They are a band of volunteer riders who give up their time to courier medical supplies around the country. These unsung heroes of the night save the NHS thousands of pounds. They work every evening, through the night and for twenty-four hours every weekend and bank holiday. They take everything from blood and platelets to medicine, medical equipment and breast milk. Basically, anything that they can get on the back of a bike.

The work of the blood bikers is vitally important to hospitals as they help at any time of the day or night. Paul is part of a team that covers Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. If a delivery must be taken out of the group's territory, the drivers work a relay system with other areas. There was one occasion when a vital package was moved from Edinburgh to Cornwall overnight.

All riders must be trained and have the Advanced Motorist qualification. All volunteers work from home and no-one gets any expenses. They are a band of truly dedicated people who want to give something back and their work is rarely recognised.

We were left humbled by the work of this band of bikers and grateful for their work.