



WARMING WINTER GIFT: Sit, Knit and Crochet group members (back) Phyllis Keogh, Joan Harding, Sue Flanigan, Netty Hanley, Maureen Hughes, (front) Joy Bloomer, Conny Doensen, Leigh Southwell and Helen James with some of the colourful blankets created by local crafters as part of the Wangaratta Library-Carevan blanket appeal. PHOTO: Emma Hillier

Warming gifts made from a tangled mess

LOVERS of knitting and crochet have until the end of the month to contribute to the Wangaratta Library-Carevan blanket appeal.

Already, 97 colourful, warm blankets have been delivered to the Docker Street library, for distribution through Carevan in the cooler months.

The appeal began in January, and will continue through to the end of April, with plenty of wool still available at the library for anyone keen to add to the collection.



BY SIMONE KERWIN
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Provision of much of the wool is courtesy of Wangaratta Woollen Mills, and new owners Bendigo Woollen Mills, which donated a 100kg bale of tangled wool to the project.

The wool has been untan-

gled over the last six months by the library's Sit, Knit and Crochet group, which celebrated reaching the end of the untangling task during its regular gathering last Thursday.

"The 'ladies of the bale' did a wonderful job, even taking the wool to a private house to finish when there were renovations going on here," Wangaratta Library's Netty Hanley said.

"It was a mammoth job, but people said they just loved doing it, and each week

they brought in a box of untangled wool that others have been picking up to make these blankets."

Anyone keen to be part of the project is encouraged to visit the library to pick up some wool, and then drop the finished project back to the library.

The blanket appeal is the third project undertaken between the library and Carevan, following last year's call for scarves, and a beanie drive in 2016.

Finding light from the recycled mess

By STEVE KELLY

A COST effective solution for glass recycling is one of the measures a Wangaratta materials recycling facility (MRF) is investigating to counter impacts caused by Chinese 'National Sword' bans on recycled product imports.

Rural City of Wangaratta council says JJ Richards has five years remaining on its contract and that collection service prices are likely to rise at least in the short-term to cover the fallout.

Simon Mackie, JJ Richards, general manager, Victoria, said China effectively closed the gate to all MRF imports due to the reduction in allowable contaminants to 0.5 per cent and this has had a significant impact on the Australian recycling industry.

With the exception of very clean input materials, MRFs are not designed to produce a product with 0.5 per cent contamination as this is a rate 10 times less than the previous standards.

"JJ Richards is looking for solutions that will ensure that the produced products have long term sustainable markets and part of this is to find a cost effective solution for glass recycling which is currently being actively worked on," Mr Mackie said.

Council director of infrastructure services Alan Clark detailed that glass is the biggest contributor to the cost of recycling, thus allowing for the market opportunity.

"At the moment there is no market for it and our recycler is developing a market for crushed glass of Imm-5mm and they're working on a procedure to have that in place within weeks rather than months," Mr Clark said.

"There probably will be (a cost increase to council), but we're hoping it won't be significant."

Local ratepayers are currently charged \$1.4 million per annum for their recycle bins to be collected and Mr Clark said this is likely to rise above the planned six per cent increase.

"Our service has continued as normal for ratepayers and recyclables will still be collected," Mr Clark said.

China's policy that came into effect on January 1 means significantly lower contamination levels on imported recycled materials apply, and fewer import licences will be issued.

The National Waste and Recycling Industry Council (NWRIC) warned that without significant market changes, kerbside and commercial recycling contracts could be cancelled.

This includes the collection and recycling of paper, mixed plastics and some metal products.

NWRIC says preliminary solutions which may assist include contract renegotiations, stockpiling product, Commonwealth assistance, and reinvigoration of domestic re-manufacturing capacity.

The Labor State Government provided a \$13 million package for councils and industry to support the ongoing kerbside collection of household recyclable waste but council's will be on their own from July 1.

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