



# Media Release

18 March 2021

## **City donates to Bicycles for Humanity (WA) in sustainability project to benefit WA and African communities**

Bicycles have sadly become a common throwaway item but the City of Cockburn's waste education team has found a sustainable way to extend their useful lives.

The City is poised to donate a load of 30 bikes to the WA chapter of Bicycles for Humanity (B4HWA), a global volunteer-run, non-profit organisation which sends bikes to remote Aboriginal communities in WA and others in Namibia and Zambia, each month.

While the City will continue to sell some bikes through its Reuse Shop at Henderson Waste Recovery Park, including very small children's bikes, others will be passed on to the charity on a monthly basis.

City of Cockburn Waste Education Coordinator Clare Courtauld said bikes to be donated were those the City received from its residents or during verge collections.

"We will continue to divert very old or rusty bikes to scrap metal recycling, but bikes in good condition or that can easily be prepared for safe use will be donated to B4HWA," Ms Courtauld said.

"Every year around 1.5 million bikes are sold across Australia and about around half of these will end up unused or abandoned. It's important to identify alternative uses for items people no longer want and decide to throw out."

B4H WA Project Coordinator Jamie Brindle said the bikes were either mended by volunteers at its Midvale workshop before being shipped out or new owners in WA communities learned new skills at bike maintenance workshops coordinated by local police or schools.

In Africa, volunteers ready the bikes for use and donate them to community members, including nurses and doctors in need of transport to do their vital work.

Each of the 40ft B4H shipping containers becomes a Bicycle Empowerment Centre



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providing employment, skills, training, business and economic development opportunities, helping break the cycle of poverty.

Mr Brindle co-founded the WA chapter of B4H a decade ago and to date, it has donated about 8,000 bikes to African communities and 1,000 to others in remote WA.

“Generally we can’t accept small children’s bikes because we can’t find homes for the really little ones, but anything from BMX size up to full adult size is in demand. The BMXs are particularly useful for our WA remote community schools program,” Mr Brindle said.

He said bikes donated to children in isolated communities helped prevent boredom, were an incentive to increase school attendance, provided an independent mode of transport for getting to school and helped kids make use of community-based bike and pump tracks. They also provided a way for people to learn how to maintain their own bikes.

In Africa, the most useful bikes were adult sized sturdy hybrids or mountain bikes and BMX sized bikes, as many were used to cart or tow heavy loads and equipment.

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