

## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **Christmas is all about Community**

The Wynyard Community Christmas Collection officially kicked off yesterday with the first donation, 15 kilograms of Lion's Club Christmas cakes, going under the tree at the Wonders of Wynyard Exhibition and Information Centre drop off point.

Waratah-Wynyard Councillor Leanne Raw officially opened the annual Community Christmas Collection, stating that all the donations stay in our community and support families who are doing it tough at Christmas time.

"Non- perishable food items, gift vouchers or back to school items are much needed gifts this year, however new toys are also welcome. All donations should remain unwrapped so they can be matched to families in our community. Cash donations can also be made over the counter at the Wonders of Wynyard Exhibition Centre" said Cr Raw.

Chantelle French, Youth & Community Manager Northwest, St Vincent de Paul Society Tasmania, said demand for assistance has never been so high.

"We're experiencing the highest demand we've ever seen, with a 13% increase in access to services across the state. Many people are reaching out who have never accessed support before. It's expected that St Vincent de Paul will gift over 80 hampers in the Wynyard area this Christmas" said Ms French.

Despite the increase in families finding finances tight at this time of the year, there is strong support for the Community Christmas Collection and the Wynyard community are renowned for their generosity.

The initiative has been running for over a decade and has support from both community and local organisations including The Lions Club, Rotary Club, St Vincent de Paul and Coast FM.

"Already we've had a couple of calls with offers of donations for the Wynyard Community Christmas Collection. People can drop off their donations at the Coast FM office too", said Coast FM Assistant Manager, Jacky Harman-Holness.

Donations can be delivered to the Wonders of Wynyard Exhibition & Information Centre until December 14, when Vincent Industries will put together hampers in time for Christmas distribution to local families in need.

**Authorised for general media distribution by Shane Crawford, General Manager, Waratah-Wynyard Council on Wednesday November 15th, 2023.**

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