

The West Australian

Mobile wardrobe to roll into Goldfields communities offering free clothes

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 Thread Together will bring its mobile van to the Goldfields. Credit: Supplied

Providing hope to disadvantaged communities is at the heart of an Australian charity, which will this week roll into the Goldfields to donate brand new clothing to people in need.

Thread Together receives deadstock clothes, shoes and accessories from nearly 2500 retailers, which would otherwise be discarded, and donates them to vulnerable men, women, and children through its online and physical store, women's shelters and mobile wardrobe.

Thanks to a partnership between Lotterywest and support from Anglicare WA, the charity will launch its second mobile wardrobe in the heart of Perth before taking it through the Goldfields and Kimberley regions.

Thread Together worked with local charities ahead of its visit to ensure both vans were equipped with what each community wanted, according to chief executive Anthony Chesler.

"The vehicles will have seasonally appropriate, culturally sensitive clothing, because that's all been informed and that's what's being merchandised into the vehicle," he said.

“Some communities have just told us they’re looking for thongs and T-shirts, others are looking for closed toe boots.

“The essence of what we’re trying to do is give people this empowerment through choice.”

The vehicles will stop in locations across Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Kambalda, Laverton, Leonora, and Menzies, including Menzies Community Resource Centre, Laverton Cross Cultural Association, and East Kalgoorlie Primary School.

Mr Chesler said the Goldfields was identified as a region which would benefit from the initiative.

“We are a very, very data driven organisation,” he said.

“We’ve identified both the Kimberley and the Goldfields as areas of disadvantage, where we are under-represented, where access to new clothing is just very, very poor.”

The chief executive said clothing was more than just pieces of fabric and often provided people in need with a new sense of purpose.

“Clothing does more than just protect them from the elements,” he said.

“Having appropriate clothing to attend an appointment or even attend a work interview – the difference between having that and not having that can be an impediment to participation and social cohesion.

“New clothes provide a new beginning, it restores dignity, provides hope, that’s why we do that we do.”

The van will pass through the Goldfields from March 10-13, with Mr Chesler saying it would return in the future.