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## MEDIA RELEASE

### The Haven Fighting Bushfires with Seed Bombs

With the recent bushfires taking a heavy toll on the State's animal and plant population, residents and staff from Catholic Healthcare's The Haven in Wagga Wagga are working to regreen and regenerate the environment with a phenomenon called seed bombs.

The Haven's Maintenance Officer, Jade Kemp, who also has a background in horticulture, had heard of seed bombs and thought it was a great way for the residents to become involved. Jade's wife works for WIRES Wildlife Rescue, and together they were keen to help their community recover from the fires at the grassroots level.

"Seed bombs are not explosive," said Jade. "Seed bombs are a powerhouse mixture of compost, soil, seeds and clay, and air drying them in balls like ravioli. These can then be thrown into devastated bushland areas that will grow into plants and trees over time. The way they work is that when it rains, the clay coating dissipates and the seeds germinate," he added.

"We have been working with Landcare to ensure the seed bombs we have made contain seeds specific to the area where needed to replenish the flora and fauna. We are simply replacing what was there originally; we are not introducing new plants."

"Some of the plants we hope to replenish are correas, grazing plants such as kangaroo grass and poa grass, and ground covers such as hardenbergia. The habitat includes small animals and insects such as native finches, moths, mountain pygmy possums, wallabies and kangaroos.

"There's a real sense of community, and everyone is doing their part to help out during this crisis period. The support in the community has been overwhelming. The Haven has donated \$500 for the seeds, local businesses such as Chaston Street Nursery and Wagga Wagga Nursery have donated seeds, and the Wagga Wagga Pottery Club has donated the clay," said Jade.

The residents of The Haven and visiting residents from Blakeney Lodge have enthusiastically embraced the idea of putting together the seed bombs.

"Not only did they have fun in the process, the residents felt they made a valuable contribution and had an important role to play in the firefighting effort. In all, we made 1,000 seed bombs. The residents made a huge difference, and I am proud of every single one of them," said Jade.

"We will be donating the seed bombs to Murrumbidgee Landcare for the restoration of state forests and WIRES Wildlife Rescue to disperse on private lands. I hope that the seed bombs will regenerate the areas destroyed by the bushfires of say about 10 football fields," he added.

Residential Manager of The Haven, Stacy Moses said, “There is so much devastation following the fires. It has been a stressful time for all. We opened our doors to the residents of Blakeney Lodge, Tumut and residents of Tumut, Batlow and Tumbarumba impacted by the bushfires. The fires have also impacted many of our staff. Some were unable to return home. It’s wonderful to see everyone coming together to do something positive and meaningful. I am grateful to Jade for bringing his excellent seed bomb initiative to our home.”

The Haven has provided high-quality care to the local community for more than 65 years. For more information go to [www.catholichealthcare.com.au/residence/the-haven/](http://www.catholichealthcare.com.au/residence/the-haven/)

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