

WHEEL STILL BE OUT AND ABOUT

DOZENS of disabled people in Wigan are set to benefit from a National Lottery grant worth more than £100,000.

The grant, awarded to the Wigan-based mobility charity The Wheelchair Fund, will provide around 36 pieces of mobility equipment for disabled people across Wigan Borough.

Much of the £121,000 will go to fund the volunteer-run charity's Out and About project, a long-running scheme that provides electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters to those in need.

Suffer

Project manager Susan Sullivan said: "We are delighted to receive this award.

"This will guarantee us 12 months of equipment, which is especially important given the current climate because it is charities that suffer first.

"It will also pay for the general running of the fund for the next five years. It is absolutely brilliant, I just can't tell you how happy I am."

The rest of the money, awarded by The Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities programme, will be used to help bring the fund itself into the 21st century.

Although the fund has been running for more than a decade, the committee have yet

BY CHRIS WILKINSON

to set up a website and are still without an IT system, or even a work computer.

Susan said: "We have been so busy raising funds and buying equipment that we haven't got around to setting up a website, so it is absolutely fantastic that the Lottery have given us the money to be able to do that.

"It will also allow us to set up a computerised system to bring together all our accounts, assess needs more efficiently and help more people across the borough."

Although the Wheelchair Fund committee are "ecstatic" about the grant, they are sorry the fund's founder, Doreen Taylor, is not here to see it.

Susan said: "We lost her about five years ago, but she would have been very proud of what we have got today."

Helen Bullough, Big Lottery Fund head of region for the North West, said: "This project is an excellent example of how the Reaching Communities programme is enabling local organisations to provide huge benefits for people across the region.

"This lifeline mobility service will make a huge difference to the quality of life for disabled people right across the Wigan community."

Lotto grant to fund charity for a year

