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Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum Development Fund profile

Development Fund granted	£2,000
Total cost of project	£35,000
Forum member community	Winchcombe

Overview of project August 2009

A grant from the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum has helped drive Winchcombe Day Centre's fundraising campaign for a new minibus into its final lap.

The Day Centre provides day care for more than 40 elderly or infirm local residents, three days a week and while some are collected and delivered to their homes by individual volunteer drivers, by far the greatest numbers travel in the centre's ancient mini-bus.

John Gerrard, Day Centre Chairman, said: "The outdated loading and seating arrangements of our old minibus are unsuitable for handling the increasing numbers of wheelchair-bound and severely disabled members that we now carry. This is putting an unacceptable strain on our volunteer drivers and their assistants.

"We launched a £35,000 campaign to buy a new 10 seater mini-bus with special tailgate access facilities for loading and offloading wheelchairs and severely disabled members, and improved wheelchair stowing arrangements and better seating.

"Thanks to the Forum's £2,000 Development Fund grant, all we need now is £5,000 to reach our goal."

In addition to helping local residents, the Centre provides an essential break for those who care for them.

"Success will be measured in the smiling faces of our volunteer drivers and their assistants when they discover that they have a proper mini-bus that is suited to the 21st century and does not involve back-breaking manoeuvres and accords with accepted HSE requirements," added John.

The Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum is a membership organisation of the county's rural towns and large parishes, all working hard to breathe new life into their communities. It offers Development Fund grants to its member communities – like Winchcombe - to support local projects, as well as expert advice and networking opportunities to learn from other rural communities. For more information about the Forum, contact its chairman Peter Godfrey on 0793 1736957, or visit <http://www.town2town.org.uk>

- For a GMTF Development Fund application form and more details, contact Geoff Wheeler (01453) 545583 or geof.wheeler@btinternet.com