Support for Mathew

By MALCOLM PRESCOTT

A HUGE community effort has raised $20,000 to help a disabled teenager who has spent five years living in Third World conditions under his Upper Mount Gravatt home.

Disability Services Queensland has come up with the final dollars to fix up Mathew Holland's living conditions.

The 15year-old, *pictured*, hasn't slept in his own room for five years because the progressive destruction of his muscle cells – caused by Duchenne muscular dystrophy – means he can't handle the stairs.

Mum Anne Holland said: "It was meant to be temporary but things went wrong and Mathew ended up in an electric wheelchair."

A lift was installed last year using State Government funding, but the funds could not be stretched to cover bathroom and toilet modifications to meet Mathew's needs.

That was until Kuraby Lions and Crescents of Brisbane, along with Sunnybank Community & Sports Club stepped in.

A fundraising dinner at Michael's Oriental Restaurant at Eight Mile Plains kick-started the appeal and got the money rolling.

A raft of donors and helpers ensured the goal was reached.

Mrs Holland is a proud woman. She does not seek charity, let alone publicity.

Late last year, however, she admitted the situation had reached crisis point.

"I feel like we live in a Third World country. I feel embarrassed," she said.

The family sought to sell their home and move into something more suitable but Mrs Holland said house prices put this out of their reach