

Victoria Park's greens plan fails to bowl over everyone

By Robert Downes

FAMILIES visiting a Stretford park next year will be able to enjoy a spot of bowling, thanks to a £10,000 lottery grant to improve facilities.

The Friends of Victoria Park scooped the Awards for All cash to fund free family bowling on the existing greens there.

The new facility should be up and running by spring, with any remaining cash paying to improve other park facilities, such as benches and fencing.

However, *Messenger* has learned senior bowlers who use the greens regularly fear unsupervised use of the greens could wreck them.

Bowler Linda Webb said: "We are a bit worried about the kids not being properly supervised on the grounds, which could ruin them."

"There's a lot of little things we are concerned about as well though."

"They already have a key to the shed, which was left open on one occasion."

"It's not just the ladies who feel this way, I believe the men aren't very happy either."

She added: "They're trying to say the kids are really interested but they're not. It's just to get them away from the parents for an hour."

The friends group says, however, that the cash will mean fresh new talent coming through the ranks and will only be good for the sport.

"We realise many clubs will be concerned the greens will be damaged if they are open for use by all, but we believe if youngsters are invited to take part and taught to respect the greens it

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will have a good time, and the greens won't be lost.

"We have two beautifully kept bowling greens in our park but they are behind locked gates so are only used by the bowling clubs."

"Members of the community can't

just go and play.

"We thought we'd set up our own youth bowling club and run it at the weekend from next spring, just in time for the next bowls season."

"It will be open to all and we'd really like to get a bowls coach in."

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