



BATTLE: Pauline Law of the Friends of Victoria Park is annoyed the council won't let the group rent a building there
TMN23VICTORIAPARK209

Hut's in a rut

Metro-Fri 29th MAY 2009

PARK users desperate to transform a run-down hut into a thriving community base say it is trapped in a catch 22.

Members of the Friends of Victoria Park want to use an old ladies' bowlers' hut and have applied for money to do it up.

But they say they need a council lease to get the cash.

The authority says it wants to help but that the facility is not safe enough to use.

This puts the Friends in a difficult position, says chairwoman Shelley Quinton-Hulme.

She said: "We have put in two bids for funding but we don't want

by Bethan Dorsett

to be successful and then find out we can't use it. What we're trying to do is get a bit of stability."

The group thinks it will be more likely to get funding if it is able to get a lease for the building.

It wants to create a space where community groups such as youth clubs can meet.

She said: "This has been a plan we've been working on for a long time.

"The ceiling's fallen down so the hut does need a lot of work."

Pauline Law, the group's vice-chairwoman and treasurer, said:

"There's a wonderful community spirit here and a lot could be done if we were able to use the building."

The council says it is in talks with the Friends group about the possibility of leasing the hut.

Environment councillor Jonathan Coupe said: "We do want to support this venture, but there are issues with the condition of the hut that could cause real health and safety problems for anyone using it as a community facility at this time, and we are looking at this issue in partnership with the Friends group to find the best way to proceed."