

COMMUNITY FOCUS: Friends of Victoria Park

Matthew Davis talks to members of a group who saw their local park in decline and decided to step-in and do something about it. If you want to promote your sports club, scout or guide group, charity or community centre email us at news@myadvertiser.co.uk or call 211 2520



CHEERS... Chairwoman Shelly Quinton-Hulme with park friends

With a little help from our friends

A GROUP of residents is helping to make a difference in a 110-year-old park.

Victoria Park in Stretford opened on November 15, 1902, an occasion marked by grand gates leading into the park from the corner of Victoria Road and School Road.

The gates were presented to the park to celebrate the reign of Queen Victoria.

The park was built to replace the 'Rec', a football pitch-sized area of land on the site of Henshaw Street, very close to where the park stands today.

In 2002 Friends of Victoria Park was formed, a diverse group which loves the park and meets regularly to plan improvements and community events.

It was formed to try and reverse the decline in the park.

It is always looking for new members of all ages and backgrounds to get involved and need

help to continue running existing events and run events in the future.

Friends chairwoman Shelly Quinton-Hulme said: "We are a mixed bunch from young mums and dads, a local councillor and ex-mayor to many of us who have full time jobs.

"We are brought together by our love of the park, our desire to try and reverse the decline in parts of the park and our wish to stage exciting fun and interesting community events that are free or very cheap to participate in.

"Many of the recent additions to the park were brought about from the ideas of our local community, the commitment of the Friends group and from submitting many funding applications."

The group have worked hard to get a Green Flag award for the park year in year and organised the opening of the weekend tea room in the Community Building.

With the help of 70 tea room

volunteers they offer a cup of tea and cake and toilet facilities to park users.

A bird feeding area, sculptures, benches, and a climbing boulder are among the additions to the park because of the Friends.

Shelly added: "We are looking for volunteers to help out at our event, to help with funding or just to give us ideas for the park.

"We are planning a full and varied events calendar for later this year and would love to hear from budding experts on bats and birds. Any help is welcome, as little or as much as people are able to offer."

How to get involved...

To get in touch email parkfriends@hotmail.com or come to their monthly meetings held on the first Thursday of every month at 7pm in the community building.