

£1,000 grant was 'priceless' for park

by Mike Keegan

WHEN a Stretford park became so run down it was barely usable a group of volunteers decided enough was enough.

After a decade of hard work Victoria Park continues to blossom and now one of its saviours is urging others to do their bit for their own communities.

Shelly Quinton-Hulme grew up playing in the Victoria Road facility and has been instrumental in its transformation.

Last year she picked up a £1,000 grant from Sport Relief to help continue the turnaround.

And 12 months later she will be reapplying to the charity's Advertiser-backed Community Cash fund, which has been increased from £50,000 to £100,000.

Shelly, 39, said: "The process is very quick and very easy. Sometimes when you apply for funding you are left waiting for months but last year this came through in about eight weeks.

"The application for was straightforward and self-explanatory and I'd urge others to apply."

Shelly and the Friends of Victoria Park used the cash to provide children's tables and chairs for the community



GRANT LIFELINE... Shelly Quinton-Hulme in Victoria Park

room, guards for electric heaters, book shelves and curtain tracks.

She said: "£1,000 does not sound like a lot of money but what it has given us is priceless.

"Before we got the furniture the kids had to kneel on adult chairs and it wasn't very safe.

"We've also made the heaters a lot safer and we've been able to put curtains up.

"It has made a massive difference and we will be applying again this year."

Shelly was one of

a group of volunteers who came together in 2002 to rescue the park, which had fallen into disrepair.

She is now a regular at some of the events which take place in the rejuvenated green space, including regular book sales and mother-and-baby groups.

She said: "I have a four-year-old son, Max, and he thinks we live there we're there that often."

Sport Relief is also holding a Manchester Mile run on March 26. To apply for a grant visit forevermanchester.com and to enter the run visit sportrelief.com.

The deadline for grant applications is March 9.

