

# Home Guard's hero



It's a family affair: Tommy, his wife Christina and their daughter Tracey

**We celebrate the pub industry's unsung heroes, in the first of our *In the community* features**

“They know I've got a soft heart, that's the problem,” explains Tommy Jeffery laughing. He's Failsworth Home Guard's club secretary and resident fundraiser. He's been working at the club, which overlooks the Rochdale canal in Manchester, for more than 25 years and is responsible for its day-to-day running, everything from hiring new staff to keeping an eye on the club's finances.

“When I first came to the club it was in a bit of financial strife so I started fundraising for them to keep it afloat,” he says. It seems like Tommy may have been destined to be the club's hero since day one. Nowadays, it's not the club that needs help but its members, their families and friends.

“We've started helping out anyone we can, anyone who is in trouble and needs assistance,” Tommy says. He's supported

by his wife Christina and his daughter Tracey, plus the club members. Everyone pitches in to offer support to people in the local area.

“The club has three football teams so we put on special events for them, such as race nights. We also have an annual fundraiser for our local church, St Mary's, and we've raised £2,000 for the British Heart Foundation this year,” he says.

Photos: Moy Williams

Tommy's generosity has earned him

a reputation as a 'man who can' in the local community and members frequently approach him with fundraising requests and ideas.

Recently, they held an evening event to raise money for a local boy, Harley Hesford, who was born with cerebral palsy

*“All our events are a success – it's not about how much money you raise, it's about doing the best you can for the community”*

and is unable to walk unaided. Harley's family are trying to raise £40,000 to send him to America for a surgical procedure that will help him to walk independently. To raise money, Failsworth Home Guard put on a singing event and collected £2,000. They are already planning a second event for later this year.

The club's commitment to fundraising has only been possible because of its members. “We're really lucky that we have such supportive members who all offer to help and work together,” he says. As a non-profit organisation, the club understands the need for mutual support. This is especially important in an area

that doesn't have many clubs and pubs.

“You've got to give something back in life, haven't you?,” says Tommy. “It's important to help others because you never know what the future might bring. One day it could be you that needs a helping hand.”

Tommy's motto is “If you treat people the right way, then they'll treat you the right way.” For him, it's not about how much money the club collects, but the fact that they're trying to help. “All our events are a success,” he explains. “It's not about how much money

you raise, it's about doing the best that you can for the community.”

For more information about how you can support Harley's Quest, visit <http://harleysquest.moonfruit.com>.

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Community man Tommy Jeffery



At the heart of the community, Failsworth Home Guard overlooks the Rochdale canal