

Super Jenny wins award

A supermum from Old Colwyn has won a national award.

When residents of the Tan y Lan housing estate want something doing, whether it's organising activities for youngsters or fundraising for the elderly, they turn to Jenny Hughes.

She is at the hub of virtually all activities on the estate and now her contribution to the community over many years has been recognised at a prestigious ceremony in Cardiff.

The 32-year-old mother-of-two was presented with the Ruth Radley Award for outstanding achievement in participation in the awards scheme organised by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS Cymru).

Jenny, who has lived in Tan y Lan all her life, was nominated by Cartrefi Conwy, who took over responsibility for council housing from Conwy County Borough Council. There are almost 400 houses on the estate – more than a quarter of them are owned by the association.

But in support of the nomination there were glowing tributes to her work from Clwyd West MP David Jones, local Community Police Officers and Cllr Brian Cossey and Cllr Cheryl Carlisle.

Cllr Carlisle said: "I find her energy and commitment all the more commendable because she is also a full time carer and that on its own is a demanding, 24-hours-a-day job – let alone all the time and organisation she puts into all her community development and support.

Jenny became involved with the Tan y Lan Tenants and Residents' Association in 2002 and was instrumental in obtaining grants for the extension and refurbishment of the community centre which is the heartbeat of local activities.

Now secretary of the Association, she then saw the need for activities for youngsters so set up the Kidz Club, which meets twice a week.

Phil Jones, Cartrefi Conwy's Community Involvement Manager, said the club had galvanised the community, getting more people involved in its affairs.

“Jenny is trusted and highly respected by local parents, the tenant and resident body, and partnership agencies including police and councillors,” he said.

Jenny is keen on catering and uses her skills and enthusiasm to teach youngsters how to prepare and cook simple, healthy meals. Last Christmas they catered for MP David Jones who described it as “one of the finest Christmas dinners I have ever had”.

Mr Jones added: “Jenny Hughes is doing a tremendous job at the community centre and deserves every encouragement and support.”

The year-round activities include Fun Days – the next one on May 30 is in aid of the cancer centre at Glan Clwyd Hospital – discos, parties, bonfire nights and a Homework Club.

What makes it even more remarkable is that Jenny’s day starts at 6.30am when she starts work as a cleaner at a local surgery.

As well as family commitments, community efforts then take up most her time, her latest project being the launching of a food co-operative which is proving popular.

“I suppose on average I put in 60-65 hours a week in various community activities, but I do enjoy it,” she said.

She recently took on another new role – as DJ at wrestling promotions at which her 14-year-old son Steven is taking part.

“I went along to one venue and wasn’t very impressed with the set-up and so offered to have a go, and now I’m doing it in different places,” she said.

Cartrefi Conwy’s Estate Officer Lynda Johnson said Jenny was an asset to the Community Centre and to the community in general due to her enthusiasm and commitment.

“She has started a homework club and is currently fundraising for computers for the community centre to enable those without such facilities at home to have access and therefore a better chance of equality in education.

“Every community needs someone like Jenny who works for the good of the tenants, residents and children of Tan y Lan on a voluntary basis and in a selfless fashion.”



Pictured: Jenny Hughes shows off her award.