

A Rhyl woman who helped the children of keyworkers during the Coronavirus lockdown and supported a friend in need has been named the town's community hero.

Leanne Bailey, who lives off Mount Road, Rhyl, said she was 'stunned' to have been nominated and chosen for the Rhyl Town Council award.

Friend Maggie Kearsley put Leanne forward after the two struck up a friendship at Rhyl's Christ the Word Catholic School. During lockdown, both had been working at the Oak Tree Centre helping keyworker children, and it was this, alongside Leanne's companionship, that prompted Maggie to submit the nomination.

Maggie said: "Leanne has really helped me over the last year. She offers me good advice, listens when I need someone to talk to and even picks me up and takes me to work. Leanne was very supportive of the Oak Tree Centre children and made everyone smile. She thoroughly deserves the award."

Alongside Leanne, the work of Rhyl's Rachel Williamson, who makes crocheted tops for Royal Mail boxes, has also been recognised by mayor Cllr Ellie Chard. Cllr Chard has written to Rachel to thank her for her creative efforts and invite her to a future council presentation evening.

Cllr Chard said: "Our search for Rhyl's community hero came at the end of our eight-week #StayHome competition which saw children from across the town taking part in challenges set by the town council. From painting pictures to capturing wildlife, children shared with us their lives in lockdown, and we were blown away by the creative talent out there.

"But we also wanted to recognise unsung heroes like Leanne and Rachel who have been valiantly doing their bit to keep the town and its residents going. Both are worthy of the recognition coming their way."

The pair will be invited to the council chamber for a special celebration once restrictions permit.

Leanne said: "I don't think I've done anything out of the ordinary. I try and listen to people and help where I can, and I'm pleased that Maggie's feels I've been able to support her. Sometimes people need someone to listen.

"I also hope all of us at the Oak Tree Centre made life a little more normal for the children of keyworkers during what was a strange time for them. I'm amazed to win this award and look forward to the presentation ceremony."

Ends

