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### **Wii LIKE TO KEEP FIT IN ROTHERHAM**

Bakers Field Court, an extra care scheme for older people in Rotherham has residents queuing up for a go on their latest gadget – a Nintendo Wii.

Chevin Housing Association run and manage Bakers Field Court working in partnership with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council who provide support & care services. Staff on site identified there was a need to introduce residents to some type of gentle exercise and come up with the idea of getting a Nintendo Wii. They looked in to what sports packages were available and those that would be of interest and benefit to residents such as golf, ten-pin bowling, bowls and boxing.

Since the Wii has been available, new friendships have formed, people have become more physically active and this in turn has increased general well being/confidence at the same time as having fun. Alongside of this, it has been an introduction to learning new technology which older people can sometimes be apprehensive about. Residents have broken down some of the barriers to modern technology and due to its success, further plans include introducing the equipment at other Rotherham schemes and arranging tournaments between schemes and the wider community.

Staff at Bakers Field Court have also been working with " Digital region" helping residents to make Free Skype to Skype calls and to access programmes which enable them to make G.P appointments, order prescriptions, access community information, transport schedules and much more.

**Vicky Fenton, Assistant Supporting Housing Manager said** "There is a tendency sometimes to assume that older people are not interested in new technology. This initiative clearly shows that is not the case! It's great to see people having so much fun."

**Mrs Maureen Robinson, aged 72 and a resident at Bakers Field Court said** "I enjoy using the Wii, it has helped me make many new friends, it is a meeting point for us. Ten Pin Bowling programme is one my favourite games. I have so much fun whilst exercising at the same time. Its great, everyone needs to have a go on one."

The scheme has just found out that they are in the final three short-listed for the Guardian Awards 2010, Care of Older People Category for the way they have engaged with residents through new technology. The awards ceremony is in late November so fingers crossed!!!!

**Photographed:** Residents enjoying a game of bowling at Bakers Field Court.