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**durrants**  
Gorkana Group

# Second retirement home opens in city

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**BECOMING a pensioner is something we all have to come to terms with eventually but the opening of Shenley Wood Village has made it that bit easier for nearly 200 people in the city.**

Most of us would hope that we'd have someone to grow old with and it's unlikely we'd consider that unsuitable accommodation might get in the way of this.

But for two of the first residents at the new retirement village this was a real possibility.

Marjorie and Brian Leach have been together for 61 years and getting a place in ExtraCare Charitable Trust's second retirement village in Milton Keynes means that they can stay together for many years to come.

Mrs Leach said: "At the moment our daughter looks after us but she is not a well woman and she wanted to make sure that if anything happened to her we'd be well looked after.

"We've been living in a council bungalow but Brian has dementia and if we hadn't been able to move in here eventually I wouldn't be able to cope and he'd have had to move into a home.



**Grand opening: The first residents have moved into Shenley Wood Village**

"We've been together for 61 years, 62 in November, and getting a place here means we can be together for as long as possible."

Shenley Wood Village is a partnership between Milton Keynes Council, the **Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)**, The Department of Health and The ExtraCare Charitable Trust.

It follows Lovat Fields Village, which opened in Willen in 2007 and is currently over-subscribed.

ExtraCare's chief executive, Nick Abbey, said: "Milton Keynes is the first place where we have built two retirement homes, the demand is overwhelming.

"We have excellent feed back from our villages and we believe this is the way of the future.

"We like to be inclusive and so although some people own their homes others pay very little rent depending on their circumstances.

"Living here is more like being





**Ribbon cutting: From left, Margaret Allen from the HCA, Brian and Marjorie Leach, Nick Abbey and deputy mayor Catriona Morris**

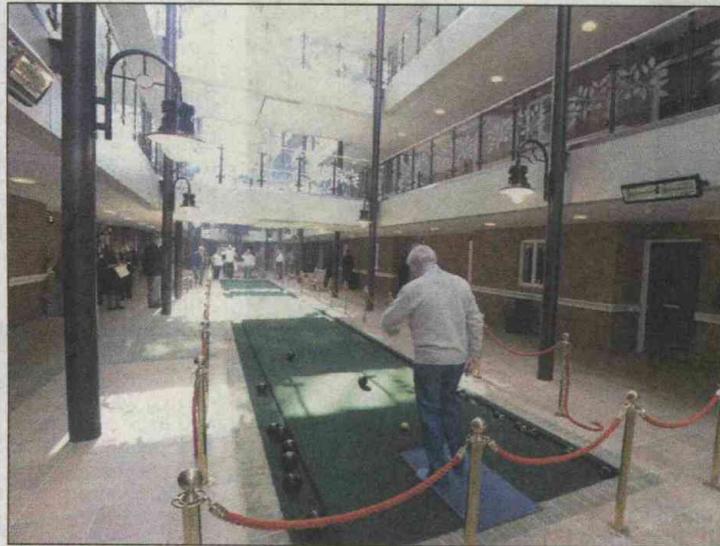
at a hotel than a retirement home."

The village boasts 18 health and leisure facilities, including a restaurant, bar, village hall, well-being centre, IT suite, craft room and greenhouse.

Councillor Debbie Brock, cabinet member for adult, older years and health at Milton Keynes Council, said: "ExtraCare villages in Milton Keynes offer residents support in the choices they can make in maintaining an independent and fulfilling lifestyle."

Last Wednesday visitors were serenaded by the village choir as they entered the impressive building.

The celebration marked the opening of the first 184 apartments, with a further 116 due to be completed by next winter.



**Relaxing: A resident makes the most of the indoor bowls**