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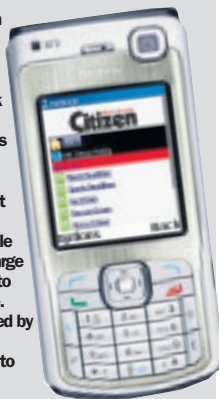
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MK MIX IN CONVERSATION WITH JADE ADE



**FILM director and
screenwriter Segun
Oguntola arrived in Milton
Keynes in 2007 after
growing up in south-east
London and spending
five years developing
a film industry in the
Gambia, west Africa. He
was immediately struck
by how so many cultures
and backgrounds were
represented in the city's
new population and set
out how to find out why
so many people come
here to make a new start,
and become part of the
MK Mix.**

1. Who are you and what is your background?

I am a British born Nigerian and have lived in
the UK for the last 20 years. I lived in London for
most of that only moving to Milton Keynes two
years ago. I qualified with an HND in Hotel and
Catering, hold a teacher training certificate, and
studied business and finance at North London
University.

Over the years I have worked with a number
of public sector funded organisations to support
young people by helping them identify their
potential.

I have sponsored healthy eating campaigns
in London for teenagers where they were
recruited and trained to cook wholesome food
with fresh ingredients bought from the market.
I am passionate about developing and engaging
young people from diverse backgrounds,
especially those that are socially excluded.

2. What attracted to you come to MK in the first place?

I was attracted to Milton Keynes by my sister
and brother-in-law who have lived here for eight
years. They emphasised the youthfulness of
the city and the peaceful surroundings. When I
visited their church I fell in love with the word of
God. I love the quiet life and greenery and the
space; it's a good environment to raise children.
Coming from London Lambeth where crime is
very high, it was important for me to bring my
son up in an environment where we can have a
good friend and family support.

3. What's the most striking difference you've found between MK and the place where you've lived the longest?

London is a highly cosmopolitan city with lots
of people from different origins. It is bubbly, full
of life and colourful. It has a very good public
transport system including buses and the trains.
However, in recent years it has become plagued
with crime especially among the youth. Milton
Keynes is a unique city completely different
from any other city in the UK. It is a growing
city with lots of different culture, a beautiful



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What we need is Jade's great big Melting Pot



IN THE MIX: Jade Ade

potpourri mix of people with young families.

4. Please tell us about all the ways in which you are involved in MK life?

My project in Milton Keynes has been to
promote community cohesion and encourage
Afro Caribbeans and the ethnic minority groups
to identify, look after, and celebrate their cultural
heritage. Some of the events we have done
include 2009 Black History Month. This was a
cultural fun day with food from the different
countries including African-inspired fashions,
energetic African dancing and a number of stalls
showcasing different speciality products. I also
organised a spring/summer fun day for young
people, and a networking event in June 2010 to
empower black and ethnic minority businesses.

5. How easy have you found it to settle here?

I have found it relatively easy to settle as I
have family here and have made good friends
within the church. It has taken some getting
used to, especially the quietness and I miss
some of the hustle and bustle of London.
My major bugbear has been the public
transportation provision for a city of this
kind, I think these needs to be developed and
expanded.

**JADE Ade has several years' experience in
cultural and event management, catering
and hospitality. She is involved in Youth
Development as well as providing support
for ethnic minority small and medium
businesses. She owns a non profit social
enterprise called 'Melting Pot' and moved
to Milton Keynes two years ago attracted
by the 'potpourri' mix of people.**

6. How far have you spread your net so far?

I have made links with small and medium
businesses, the Business Link and Chambers
of Commerce and some existing social
enterprises. I worked with the local group
- Awake for Africa to celebrate the Black History
Month in October 2009. I recently attended the
first Miss Tropical MK which was a great event to
see within the community.

7. Are you planning to stay in MK for a fixed time for good?

Yes. I plan to stay in Milton Keynes with my
family. My vision is to encourage more people
who have the desire and talents to become self
employed and start businesses particularly
young people, women, men, black and ethnic
communities, and those living in the most
deprived areas of the city thereby adding value
to their lives.

8. Before considering moving here to make a new life, what's the best piece of advice you could offer people?

I would say come down with your family and
have a check list of what your family needs are.
You will probably have a long list of ticks.

9. Tell us something about the city/ country of your origins?

Nigeria used to be known as the giant of
Africa. It is extremely rich in petrol and lots of
other natural gas. Nigeria is a beautiful country
rich in many ways with lots of natural resources.
Traditional dishes include jolloff rice with fried
meat served with dodo (fried plantain).

10. What would you say to people who can't find anything good to say about the city?

Milton Keynes is an evolving city. I will say
every city or town has different challenges
however, my philosophy is that wherever you are
try to help make a difference.

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