

THE MK MIX– sponsored by Hotel Different Drummer, Al'Tamborista Vine, The Wine Bar

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### Who are you and what is your background?

My name is Doc Robinson. My heritage is Ghanaian but I have been in Milton Keynes for a considerable period of time. I'm married with three children and hold degrees in History and Law. (BA, LLB, MA, PhD) That's where the 'Doc' comes from.

### What attracted to MK in the first place?

It suited me then and MK still suits me after all these years. I had the opportunity of moving to Birmingham to study for my PhD, but in reality there was no real competition. By the time Birmingham became an option, Milton Keynes had become my home.

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

It is fair to say that Milton Keynes is very well organised. Not least the landscape with the greenery, parks and communal establishments that would undoubtedly attract a variety of people. This level of organisation takes some planning, but if you have lived and worked in MK for a long time you wouldn't notice until you lived elsewhere and sat in traffic for half an hour on a five minute journey. Then you would realise.

### Tell us about all the ways in which you are involved in MK life

I have been involved in a lot of community projects namely the Milton Keynes Equality Council when I used to chair the personnel section of the council, serving as a head elder in the West Bleckley Seventh-Day

# Sharing the vision for MK



**IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Doctor Robinson is chairman of the Association of Ghanaians in Milton Keynes. He believes contributing to the vision of MK is key to enjoying the best of what the city has to offer**

Adventist Community Church, a local magistrate and serving as chairman of the Association of Ghanaians in Milton Keynes (AGMK)

**How easy have you found it to**

### settle here?

When I came to Milton Keynes there was no Association of Ghanaians in Milton Keynes. AGMK which has been in existence since 1997 with the principle aims being to enhance the corporate image of Ghanaians in Milton Keynes.

The association has entertained a number of representatives for organisations such as Thames Valley, the Home Office and the Ghana High Commissioner Prof Bofo. It welcomed Judge Barbara Mensah, the first African to be appointed a circuit Court Judge in England, at our last meeting. We are also inviting the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan to attend one of our meetings, so you can see AGMK is all about being a positive influence in MK.

### Describe how MK's diversity is working in practice.

We tend to invite other organisations in MK when we are promoting community events. The Milton Keynes Community Foundation has been involved in such projects we undertake to ensure we expand to incorporate other organisations and groups.

### Are you planning to stay in MK for a fixed period?

It is difficult to say as the children are still growing up and would need to continue with their education in a stable environment.

### What's advice would you give to anyone thinking of moving to MK?

It is always a healthy and constructive exercise when introducing new people to MK. They would find it a welcoming, positive environment where they can achieve their ambitions and goals.

### Tell us something about the city/ country of your origin.

The relationship between Ghana and UK goes back over 400 years. 1957 was a significant year because it was when Ghana got its independence from the UK. Ghana then became a Republic in 1960. As with all developing countries, Ghana is enormously rich in minerals. Nevertheless, it is a country which faces enormous challenges.

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

People should look at MK as a growing city or a work-in-progress. MK has a road map and a goal to achieve. A goal without a plan and vision is like a road to nowhere.

The thing with MK is it is easy to become part of that vision and help plan and build the future of the city.

People who criticise MK for the most part do not live here, but probably have a deep desire to move here and be part of the vision, so we have to keep encouraging them.



**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.**



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