

## Introduction

Milton Keynes is a new city which, for better or worse, holds the prospect of a new life for thousands of people. Our original idea was a book about the people who designed and built it, the experiences of the `early settlers` who came here in the seventies, and the efforts of those who, in their own way, are trying to inject life into the city. Some of them are friends of ours, others were enlisted as the book took shape.

The interviews and photographs were made over a two year period. Understandably, during this time changes have occurred. We have not only a city centre and a railway station but a hospital, too. Also, our ideas about the book altered slightly as we became aware of a common denominator which runs through the collection of personal histories.

All the people interviewed possess some quality or combination of qualities which enable them to cope with major upheaval in their lives. We begin to see them as symbols of a spirit which can only be described as pioneering and which expresses itself as a readiness to accept change, to `get on and do it`. We wanted to portray as many different aspects of this quality as we could and the final selection was made on that basis.

The majority of interviews take a positive stance towards new city life. This is not due to any desire on our part to present a glowing image of Milton Keynes. Rather, we think it has to do with the fact that the more you put into the place where you live, the more you get out of it.

This book is dedicated to all the pioneers. You`ve got to believe in the myth if you want to help create the legend.