



**GHANA
UNION
MIDLANDS**

Our History

GHANA UNION MIDLANDS



Ghana Union Midlands, popularly known as GUM is the regional umbrella body for the various Ghanaian unions, associations and other groups operating in the Midlands region. GUM is an offshoot of Ghana Union Birmingham, now known as Ghana Union Greater Birmingham {GUGB}. In 2010, Ghana Union Birmingham moved on to a new direction in the next stages

of its development, and changed its name to Ghana Union Midlands [GUM] to reflect its ambition to lead on the formation of a regional umbrella group. Since then, the organisation has gone through developmental, & structural changes and growth.

GUM took on a challenging task and the leading role in organising a memorial service in July 2012 for the late Prof. John Atta Mills, former President of the Republic of Ghana. GUM managed to bring all the leaders of the major Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region together under one roof for the first time to participate in the memorial service.



Following the memorial service, all the groups that took part in the memorial service were invited by GUM to a meeting in August 2012. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and explore the formation of a regional umbrella body for Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region. At the meeting, all the representatives of the various groups that participated in the meeting agreed in principle to the formation of a regional umbrella body. It was agreed that the umbrella body will be the mouthpiece and provide a unified voice when dealing with the Ghana High Commission and statutory bodies in the UK on issues affecting the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region. It was also agreed at the meeting that GUM will lead on and play a caretaker role until the regional umbrella body is formally formed.

GUM put in motion the formation of the regional umbrella body after the August meeting in 2012. At this point, GUM took on a 'dual role' in looking after its Birmingham members, whilst at the same time, pursuing the formation of a regional umbrella body to provide a unified voice for the Ghanaian community in the Midlands. The journey to form a regional umbrella body for Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region was a difficult and tortuous task. Building a general consensus is a time consuming and difficult process in the formation of any community group with diverse interests and aims. The journey was marked by a process of ironing out differences amongst the various interest groups through hard negotiations and agreement.

Eventually, on the 31st January 2015, we finally achieved our main goal of forming a regional umbrella body for Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region. An overwhelming majority of the founding members of the regional umbrella body finally agreed and appended their

signatures to a constitution. This legal document binds all the local groups in the Midlands region who have become members of the regional umbrella body. Following the adoption of the constitution, the umbrella body was later registered on 27th February 2015 as a UK charity with the Charity Commission. The current GUM trustees consist of the representatives of the local groups in the Midlands region forming the regional umbrella body.

Following the registration of Ghana Union Midlands as a charity with the Charity Commission, GUM became the sole regional umbrella body that is the mouthpiece and represents the various Ghanaian groups in the Midlands at regional level. GUM liaises with the Ghana High Commission, Local Authorities, and other Statutory Agencies in the UK in dealing with matters that affect the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region.

Until 2020, the regional umbrella body operated on the basis of a 'dual role' model, which consists of GUM and Ghana Union Birmingham, as one entity. This model confused people concerning the status of GUM and its membership, which included groups and also individual members. Despite attempts to clarify the structure of GUM as an umbrella organisation with the 'Birmingham Group' serving as the Secretariat, the message did not resonate well with people. Hence the confusion of synonymously referring to the Birmingham Union as GUM.

Therefore, to avoid the confusion, it became necessary for us to separate GUM from Ghana Union Birmingham in 2020. As a result, the two unions have now become separate legal entities with their own constitution and administrative structures. Ghana Union Birmingham has adopted a new name and is now known to as Ghana Union Greater Birmingham, commonly referred to as GUGB. This local union serves the interests of and provide welfare support to the

Ghanaian community in Birmingham and its environs.

GUM now operates as a 'hub and spokes' network umbrella body. The concept of 'hub and spokes' model allow each group within the umbrella body to retain its autonomy and identity in managing its affairs at local level. Working in collaboration in a co-ordinated way provides us with a unified voice for all the Ghanaian groups than any single group could do working alone.

GUM membership comprises of Ghanaian groups operating in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Telford, Walsall, Dudley, Coventry, Rugby, Northampton, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby. These groups are classified as affiliated members. Membership of GUM is also open to non- Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region wishing to join and be part of the regional umbrella body. These groups are classified as associate members,

Our Vision

Our vision is to create an environment that enables groups, organisations, and people from different racial, cultural, and diverse backgrounds to co-exist peacefully and to work together, thus appreciating diversity and valuing each other in the communities from which we operate.

Our Mission

Our mission is to bring and unite all the Ghanaian related groups under one regional umbrella body in the Midlands region. We aim to achieve this by means of collaboration and working together in partnership in a coordinated way as a 'hub and spokes' network umbrella body, and to pursue our common interests and goals to serve the Ghanaian community much better in the region.



Our Aim

- To act as the sole regional umbrella body dedicated to uniting all the Ghanaian unions, associations, professional groups and other self-interest or business groups who are providing support and serving the interests of the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region to work together in partnership to give us a common and unified voice.
- To act as a resource to develop and increase the capacity and skills of leaders of disadvantaged groups and members of the community; in such a way that they become more effective and efficient in the delivery of sustainable services to help meet the needs of the Ghanaian community.
- To provide leadership support and work closely together with the GUM satellite group members, and other Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region; through a multi-agency approach to support the Ghanaian and African communities to improve the quality of life for their members.
- To support the Ghanaian and African migrant communities with their integration into British society; in a way that preserves and honours their African heritage and help them to build positive relationships with local indigenous and other ethnic minority communities. Thus, encouraging them to become active and responsible citizens.

Our Structure, Governance & Management

Legal Structure

GUM is a registered charity in England and Wales, registration number 1160692. It comprises of various Ghanaian groups in the Midlands region, who have come together to form a regional umbrella body. The structure of GUM is that it operates as a hub and spokes network organisation, with members collaborating and working together to support the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region in a co-ordinated way. This structure allows each affiliated group member of the umbrella body to retain its autonomy and identity in the day-to-day management and steering of its affairs at local level.

Governance

GUM is governed by a board of trustees whose purpose is to ensure that as an organisation, all the groups forming the regional umbrella body are cooperating and working effectively together towards achieving our vision and common goals. The GUM trustees are the people who form the governing body, and are regarded as the persons having the general control and management of our charity's administration. The trustees have full legal responsibility for the actions of GUM, and as a board has ultimate responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of the regional umbrella body; ensuring that the charity upholds

its ethos and values, and delivers its objectives. The trustees meets at least four times a year.

Trustees

The current trustees are:

- Dr Quaye Botchway
- Odehye Nana Kwasi Asiedu- Ofei
- Mr Ivor Agbemeyale
- Pastor Adje Wilson
- Mr Peter Kennedy Amor

Management

The trustees have delegated the day-to-day management responsibilities of the umbrella body to the Ghana Union Greater Birmingham [GUGB] Secretariat Team. GUGB is an affiliated member of the regional umbrella body [GUM]. This arrangement is on a temporary basis for the GUGB secretariat team to provide administrative support for GUM, with specific terms of reference to deliver and achieve GUM's strategic objectives. The officers of the GUGB secretariat team are volunteers and receive no remuneration or financial benefit for the work they do for the regional umbrella body. This delegation is controlled by requiring regular reporting from the GUGB Secretariat to the GUM Board of Trustees. The trustees collectively retain the overall control and administration of the umbrella body. They are committed to ensuring that good governance and management is adhered to at all times.

Our Services

The Regional Umbrella Body performs the following functions:

- Provide a forum for the GUM network member organisations and other Ghanaian related groups in the Midlands to co-ordinate activities, and share resources, expertise, information, and experience in order to enhance their common goal of providing support for the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region.
- Offer support and advice on management, financial management, funding, governance, and advocacy. Also, to provide consultancy and training to assist the umbrella body member groups to efficiently manage and run their respective unions or associations in their respective localities in the Midlands region. Furthermore, to promote good practice amongst the GUM membership.
- Organise an annual conference to discuss major issues affecting the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region to promote community development and cohesion.
- Raise the profile and status of GUM as the sole recognised regional umbrella body that represents the various Ghanaian Unions, Associations and Groups in the Midlands region, and liaise with the United Kingdom Government, Local Authorities, and other statutory agencies on behalf of the Ghanaian unions, associations, and other groups. Also, liaise with the Government of Ghana through its High Commission in London on behalf of the Ghanaian community in the Midlands region.
- Provide a united voice for GUM and its associated member groups by which the views of GUM and also the views of other Ghanaian unions and associations relating to the needs of the Ghanaian community will be heard in policy circles by UK policymakers and statutory agencies.