

MEDIATION

FACT SHEET

Mediation is an effective way of resolving disputes without the need to go to court. It involves using an independent third party – a mediator – who helps both sides to come to an agreement. If both parties agree, it is often the best way of settling differences before they get worse.

Mediation is based on the following principles:

- You settle your differences together and try to reach a 'win/win' situation, which everyone involved is happy with.
- You look to the future, with emphasis on rebuilding relationships, rather than blaming the other person for what has happened in the past.
- It's ok to acknowledge your feelings as well as facts – this allows you to 'let go' of your anger and upset and move forward.

This fact sheet explains the benefits of mediation and gives you information on what will happen if you and your neighbour(s) are referred to a mediation agency.

What are the benefits of mediation?

- It gives you an opportunity to step back and think about how you and anyone else involved can put the situation right. This can mean looking at your own behaviour as well as that of the other person. That can be a difficult thing to do but can really help solve the situation.
- It enables you to come up with your own practical solution which will benefit all sides.
- It allows you to rebuild relationships because you work together to find an agreement. This is different from a legal process, where hostility often still exists between the people involved once the case is over.
- Mediation is generally a more cost-effective and quicker solution than going to court and is a flexible process that can be used to settle disputes in a whole range of situations. It is also an excellent preventative tool, as it can be used effectively to stop problems getting worse.

How can mediation help me?

- Mediation allows you to be heard. In many cases, a simple apology from either or both sides of a dispute is all that is required to put the situation right.
- It is an empowering process that encourages you to put forward your own suggestions and ideas.
- It is less intimidating than a legal process, and you represent yourself rather than having someone speak for you.
- It provides solutions that you have agreed, giving you all a sense of ownership of any agreement. As a result, agreements reached in this way last much better than solutions handed down by the courts or an arbitrator.
- It can be organised quickly. When disagreements are not addressed, they can get worse quickly. Mediation is easy to arrange and can be completed within weeks.
- Most neighbourhood mediation is free to those who want to use it, and many other forms of community mediation are available at a reasonable rate.

What is the role of the mediator?

In neighbour mediation, mediators generally work in pairs. The role of the mediator is based on the following principles:

- Mediators help you identify your needs, clarify issues, explore solutions and negotiate your agreement.
- Mediators do not advise those in dispute, but help you communicate with one another.
- Mediators are impartial, and must have no stake in the outcome of the process.

What will happen in mediation?

Mediation is a flexible process that is used in a number of different situations. In most types of mediation, the following steps take place:

- If one person asks for mediation, all those involved are contacted to check they agree to take part. Anyone can withdraw at any stage if they want to.

- You are visited individually by mediators. The mediators will ask each of you to explain how you see the current situation and how you would like it to be in the future. They will also ask what suggestions you have for sorting out the disagreements.
- Information shared during the mediation is private and confidential (with the exception of disclosure of serious abuse) unless otherwise agreed.

If you all agree to come to a joint meeting, the following steps take place:

- Mediators will explain the structure of the meeting and ask you all to agree to some basic rules, such as listening without interrupting and not using offensive remarks.
- Each of you will then have a chance to talk about the problem as it affects you. The mediators will try to make sure that you all understand what each of you has said, and allow you to respond.
- They will then help you all identify the issues that need to be sorted out. Very often this leads to solutions that no-one had thought of before, helping you to reach an agreement.
- The agreement is usually written down and signed by both parties and the mediators. However, it is not legally binding and cannot be enforced in court unless the parties decide to make it a legal contract. The agreement does not affect your legal rights either, allowing the freedom to find another way of dealing with the dispute at any time.

Mediation is not an 'easy option' – when people are honest and are encouraged to say what they feel, the situation can provoke strong emotions – but once people have had a chance to express their feelings, they are more likely to let their hostility go.

Contact us

If you think that you could benefit from mediation, please contact us:



If you are a **PCHA customer** phone us on **020 8451 8000** or email **info@pcha.org.uk** www.pcha.org.uk



If you are a **Springboard Housing Association customer** phone us on **020 8475 0033** or email **info@springboardha.org.uk** www.springboardha.org.uk



If you are a **Pathmeads customer** phone us on one of the numbers below: Temporary housing **020 8900 4900** Octavia Hill **020 8900 4998** Key Places **020 7380 9025** or email **info@pathmeads.org.uk** www.pathmeads.org.uk



If you are a **St Matthew Housing customer** phone us on **01284 732550** or email **info@stmatthewhousing.org** www.stmatthewhousing.org

Company number 3802456. Housing Corporation Number L4286. Registered Office: Capital House, 25 Chapel Street, London NW1 5DT

If you need any part of this information in large print, Braille, on audio tape or explained in your own language please contact us on the number below.

Si necesita esta información en Braille, en CD, en cinta o en su propio idioma, póngase en contacto con nosotros en el teléfono siguiente.

Spanish

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على أي جزء من هذه المعلومات مطبوعاً بأحرف كبيرة أو بطريقة برايل أو مسجلاً على اسطوانة مدمجة أو شريط صوتي أو مشروحاً باللغة التي تتحدثها، يرجى الاتصال بنا على الرقم الموضح أدناه.

Arabic

যদি আপনি এই তথ্যগুলোর যে কোন একটির সম্বন্ধে বিস্তারিত জানতে চান, অথবা আপনার নিজের ভাষাতে ব্লেট, সিডি, অডিও টেপ-এ পেতে চান তাহলে নিম্নলিখিত নম্বরে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Bengali

Si vous souhaitez obtenir une partie de ces informations en Braille, sur CD, cassette audio ou expliqué dans votre langue, veuillez nous contacter au numéro indiqué ci-dessous.

French

જો તમારે કોઈ પણ ભાગની આ માહિતી બ્રેઈલ, સીડી ઉપર, ઑડિયો ટેપ અથવા તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં સમજી શકો તેની જરૂર હોય તો નીચે જણાવેલ નંબર ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

Gujarati

Se necessitar de parte desta informação em caracteres aumentados, em Braille, em CD, cassete áudio ou apresentada no seu idioma, por favor contacte-nos, através do telefone abaixo indicado.

Portugese

Haddaad u baahan tahay warkan afkaaga-hooyo, afka loogu talagalay dadka aan arki karaan – afka faraha ama CD-ga ama ajeladda rekorka nala xirir. Namberkan isticmaal.

Somali

**Telephone 020 7563 0037
or email info@ghg.org.uk**