



Problems with your neighbours?



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www.hcmediation.co.uk

Contact Information

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Charity Registration no.1081770
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Mediation is:

- An opportunity to talk to someone and be listened to without having advice or suggestions given. We don't have the magic answer, our role is to help you find the answer for yourself through supportive exploratory and creative questioning.
- A way of resolving disputes between neighbours where communication has broken down or perhaps never been established.

Mediation is also:

- **Free** - for 99% of the Borough's residents
- **Voluntary** - no one can be forced to have mediation
- **Impartial** - we are not there to take anyone's side, just to help
- **Confidential** - we don't tell anyone else the things you tell us, so we don't write a report about what we hear when we see you
- **Independent** - we don't represent other organisations

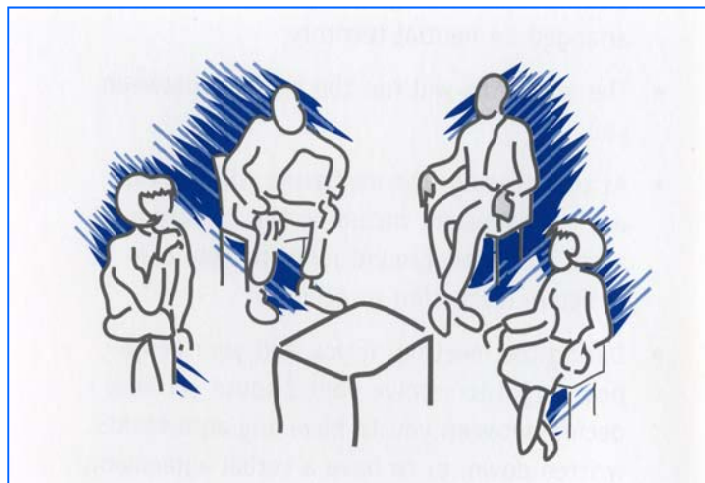
Mediation can help in many situations including problems to do with:

Noise
Rubbish
Parking
High Hedges
Boundary disputes and communal areas
Dogs and other pets
Verbal abuse, harassment
..... and many other problems



Mediation is particularly useful in situations where:

- You have been to agencies such as the Council or the Police and they've said they can't help you because there is not evidence or other reasons to take action against your neighbour.
- It isn't an issue that needs the involvement of the Police or other authorities and you would just like to resolve a breakdown in a relationship with your neighbour or some other problem.
- There is a High Hedges dispute. In these situations you are expected to try mediation before asking the Council to investigate. It may be a better option anyway as even after investigating the Council may not agree that your neighbour has done anything that they can take action over.



Mediators

- Are volunteers who come from many different backgrounds
- Are well trained and experienced in helping people to resolve neighbour disputes
- Will not take sides for or against you or your neighbour
- Are not there to judge or blame or decide who is right or wrong but to help you and your neighbour resolve the dispute you are having.
- Are independent and are not from an authority such as the Police or the local Council and do not have powers like these authorities
- Understand that you may be angry, frightened, upset, worried or have other difficult feelings because of the dispute.



Mediation is not

.....a process where you are forced to meet with your neighbour. This only happens if you choose it to happen and your neighbour also chooses to meet with you. Mediation can help both of you even if you don't choose to meet with each other. See our website for examples of how mediation can help even if your neighbour does not want to take part.

Mediation is not

..... a 'third authority' after the Police and the local Council. Mediators have no powers to direct someone to do something and are not enforcers of legislation or criminal law. Please do not ask for mediation if you are expecting us to take action against your neighbour.

Mediation is not

..... an investigation process. Mediators listen to the views of people in dispute, not to find the 'truth' and then to decide who is 'right' and who is 'wrong' but to help them to think through what has happened, how this has affected them and how they can create better ways of dealing with it in the future. Mediators do not report what they hear from you to anyone.

What is the role of mediation?

Many disputes remain unresolved because a lot of the time and energy used up by the people involved in the dispute is spent trying to prove who is 'right' and who is 'wrong'.

In many neighbour disputes this isn't possible to prove. People may feel very upset by something their neighbour has done but this does not mean that what they have done is illegal or a breach of their Tenancy Agreement or of some other legislation.

It is very rare that this approach resolves the situation unless it is clearly the case that a law or some other legislation has been broken.

This means that Mediation may be the only support available to people to help them, as the Police or Local Authority may have been involved and said that there are not grounds for them to take action.

This does not mean they are 'not doing their job', it means they are acting only within the powers they have.

In these cases, mediation can be very useful for neighbours in dispute and may even be the only assistance available to them.



The costs of not using mediation

Some disputes can lead to enormous expense both financially and emotionally for the people involved because the dispute remains and festers but is never resolved.

We have met people who have

- *spent tens of thousands of pounds on legal costs over boundary disputes but have still not resolved the problem*
- *started taking medication, or alcohol to try to cope with the stress of a neighbour dispute that remains unresolved*
- *thought that the only option open to them is to move from a home they have lovingly spent years making their own, and away from the friends they have made while living there*

If people try mediation with the aim of wanting to resolve the situation because they understand that *everyone* involved is badly affected by it, there is a good chance that we can help.

Our mediators meet with people to help them think of ways they can *support themselves* more effectively and to try to *create ways of resolving the problem*.

This is their role whether both neighbours in dispute want to try mediation or even if only one neighbour wants to try it.

If you don't try mediation because you think:

- *'My neighbour will never want it'*
- *'You can't speak with people like that'*
- *'It will be a waste of time, my neighbour will never listen, they're never going to change'*
- *wanting mediation is a sign of 'weakness'*

...then you've misunderstood our role and you've missed an opportunity to improve *your own* situation, whether your neighbour wants mediation or not.

Training and Consultancy

Hillingdon Community Mediation has provided training in Mediation and Conflict Management for a range of organisations including:

Eastern Region of Community Health Councils:

Mediation Awareness and Mediation Skills

Herts Young Homeless group:

6 day Mediator Training course

Various Community Mediation services:

Further/ Advanced mediation skills

London Borough of Bromley:

Special Educational Needs Mediation Awareness

On behalf of Mediation UK:

Special Educational Needs Practitioners workshop

Lewisham Action for Mediation Project (LAMP):

6 day Mediator Training course

Other training:

London Borough of Hillingdon Federation of Tenants and Residents Association members:

Committee skills training, Capacity Building workshops

London Borough of Hillingdon Neighbourhood Wardens:

Conflict Management

Metropolitan Police, Hillingdon:

Mediation Awareness Training for Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers

Cranford Community College:

Conflict Management Skills for Learning Mentors and Pastoral Support Staff

Hillingdon AIDS Response Trust Staff:

Conflict Management Skills for staff and volunteers

De Montfort University, Leicester:

Conflict Management Skills for student support staff



Other Areas of Mediation

We also have experience of mediating in other types of dispute including:

- Group mediations
- NHS complaints mediation
- Disability Discrimination mediation
- Workplace dispute mediation
- Special Educational Needs mediation

For these areas of mediation and for Training and Consultancy there will be a charge.

Please contact Alan on 01895 447700 to discuss your interests in any of these.

Need to resolve a disagreement?

Why not try mediation?



Please visit our website at

www.hcmediation.co.uk

Are you looking for a challenge?

- **Why not become a volunteer Mediator for Hillingdon Community Mediation?**
- **6 - day training course and ongoing support provided.**

See our website for more details of how to become a Mediator with us:

www.hcmediation.co.uk

...or call our Case Line:

01895 446611

to discuss it with one of our Trainers