

## **Community Mediation**

The following information may be useful if you intend trying mediation.

### **What is mediation?**

Mediation is a positive process for dealing with difficult situations. The aim of mediation is not to apportion blame but to find ways of moving forward that are satisfactory to everyone involved.

Records have shown that mediation is successful in around 85% of cases.

### **The process:**

Initially, a mediator will speak with you to get a good understanding of your concerns, find out what you might want as an outcome from mediation and to explain the possible next steps. You are encouraged to think carefully about what your main concerns are before this initial meeting.

The next stage has two options. The first is to meet with your neighbour with mediators present to talk things through in a safe and controlled way. These meetings are structured by the mediator(s) and everyone is given equal opportunity to air their views and concerns.

The second option is for the mediator(s) to continue to speak with you and your neighbour separately to see if acceptable agreements can be reached.

The outcome of either mediation process may involve a written or verbal agreement. It is you and your neighbour who create the agreements, and they should only be made when everyone is happy with them. A written agreement is not legally binding, but it helps everyone understand and remember what has been agreed. Agreements may then be monitored for 2-3 months.

## Things to know about mediation:

- Mediators may work alone or in pairs, they are impartial and do not take sides.
- Mediators do not judge people for what has happened or what is said; they respect everyone's views and opinions.
- Participation in mediation is voluntary. All parties make a free choice to take part and do so with the aim of talking constructively to resolve problems for everyone's benefit. Everyone taking part in mediation is expected to listen to others' concerns. This means everyone will be heard and will be given time to have their say.
- The role of the mediator is to aid communication between parties so they can reach their own resolutions. This allows people to stay in control and make their own decisions. It also removes the need for a third party to make a judgement which would probably result in a win-lose outcome.
- Mediation is focused on the future. Past events are acknowledged to establish and understand everyone's concerns, but the main focus is on working out how to live in peace. Mediation is not about identifying who is to blame.
- Mediators observe a strict code of confidentiality. What is said to the mediators will remain confidential; however, that confidentiality will not be maintained if withholding information will prejudice the welfare of any person. Additionally, confidentiality will not be maintained where there is evidence or disclosure of illegal activity.
- Brief, confidential notes relating to casework are made for the purposes of managing each case. Notes are kept for three months following case closure; this is in case we need to reopen or review your case during that period. For full details around how we store and process your data, please read our privacy policy at [TalkingResolutions.co.uk/privacy-policy](http://TalkingResolutions.co.uk/privacy-policy)