

The Mediation Service is for neighbours who have fallen out with each other.

Our team of trained mediators can help you to find a lasting solution to neighbour disputes. We offer a fast and confidential service which is free to anyone who lives in Birmingham.

Mediators are:

- **Independent** – they don't make a report on you;
- **Impartial** – they don't take sides;
- **Experienced** – they have worked on many cases just like yours; and
- **Approachable** – they will listen to you and help you to get your point across.

We ask everybody involved to sign the contract to show that they agree to follow what it says.

What will happen if I decide to try mediation?

1

Step one

If you are a council tenant contact your local housing team. They will put you in touch with a mediation team. If you are a non-council tenant call 0121 303 1111.

2

Step two

The mediators will arrange to visit you and your neighbour separately. They will ask you to tell them about the trouble you have been experiencing and you can ask them any questions about the mediation service. Everything you tell them will be treated in the strictest confidence.

3

Step three

If you both want to go ahead with mediation, the mediators will arrange to meet you both at a neutral place. This will not be in either of your homes. The mediator will ask you both to take turns to:

- talk about your view of the problem;
- say briefly what has happened; and
- talk about what you want to do to resolve the problem.

You will both be asked to listen without interrupting while the other person is talking.

4

Step four

You will both be asked to think about ONE problem and compare views. You will be asked to make suggestions to solve the problem and discuss each other's concerns. From this it may be possible to work out an agreement to settle your differences.

If you're no longer speaking to your neighbour, you can still use the mediation service.

You don't even have to sit in the same room. We offer shuttle mediation where the mediator carries messages between you.

What are the alternatives?

Experiencing difficulties with neighbours can affect your health. It can cause stress, anxiety, depression and anger – which can sometimes lead to violence.

Legal action might be appropriate in some cases. However this can take a long time and be

expensive – and it may not provide the ideal solution. The law tends to force one person to win and the other to lose. This may not be helpful when people have to go on being neighbours and you may not get the result you want.

If you decide to choose mediation it would not affect your ability to take legal action in the future if you wanted to.

Tackling the problem yourself – we will help you and offer guidance on how you can do this, without making things worse.

More than half the people who choose mediation manage to agree on at least one thing. If it doesn't work for you, it doesn't mean you can't try to solve your problems in a different way.

NOISE	HARASSMENT	GARDENS
PETS	BOUNDARIES	CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR
CAR PARKING	RUBBISH	INVASION OF PRIVACY

“It can be frightening to sit in the same room as someone that you have fallen out with. We are fully trained to maintain a safe environment and make sure that everyone involved is treated fairly and equally.”

BIRMINGHAM ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR HELPLINE: 0121 303 1111