



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Community & Neighbour**

## Frequently asked Questions Mediation and Conflict Support

### Who are Mediation Bucks?

We are a registered charity that has been helping people to resolve conflict for the past 25 years. We are independent and non-judgemental and are here to help you move forward from conflict. Our service is free to you.

### What is Mediation?

Mediation is a safe place where people in conflict can come together to hold a difficult conversation.

It is simply working towards getting the people involved in the conflict to meet each other, and mediators. The mediators help the parties to get the issues out in the open and help the parties consider how they might change things going forward

### How does it work – The Process

After an initial telephone conversation to introduce ourselves and what we do we will arrange for you and other parties involved to meet individually/separately with our Mediators – this meeting gives you an opportunity to talk freely about the issues you face and think about what you want for the future. This meeting usually takes place on zoom.

- If after these individual meetings all parties agree, a joint meeting will be arranged – This is usually face to face at a venue convenient to you
- Parties are encouraged to talk openly and respectfully and acknowledge their differences and recognise common grounds and shared needs.
- Mediators explore options with the parties, affirm steps made and encourage new ideas for getting their needs met.

In the vast majority of cases where parties agree to meet each other with the mediators, important steps towards resolving the conflict are made.

### How Can Mediation help me?

Mediation helps people to talk about the issues they face and give them the opportunity to find a shared solution they are both happy with. Mediation provides a space where people can think about what they want for the future, rather than about what has happened in the past.

It is much better to think about involving mediators early on, as mediation can help to avoid stress, worry, fears and anxiety by helping the parties bridge the gap between each other and sort out the conflict.

### What do Mediators do and how do they help.

Mediators help the parties to discover their own solution and make choices based on realistic expectations – all of

our Mediators are experienced and dedicated volunteers who are fully trained in Mediation and Conflict support. They are skilled listeners and

are independent and most importantly neutral so that all parties can talk openly about the situation they are in.

### **English is not my first language how will you help me?**

That is not a problem - We will arrange for an interpreter to support you throughout the process so please just let us know you will need this.

### **Is it Confidential?**

Yes

- We keep all your personal information safe and secure.
- We don't share what you tell us with anyone else
- The only exception to this is if we have your permission or someone is at serious risk of harm.

### **Taking Part is voluntary**

- You choose whether to use our service
- We will give you clear information and time to decide
- We will never pressure you to take part in meetings

### **Are you part of Council/Police/Social services, Housing Association?**

No, we are an independent charity and whilst we work in partnership with many agencies, we are an entirely separate and neutral agency.

### **How long does a case take?**

Cases can take anything from three weeks to three months. We work with the availability of the parties and mediators. We aim to organise the first meeting within 2 weeks of a case being referred and the needs of the parties.

### **Is participating in mediation a sign of weakness?**

No. Offering mediation can be a sign of strength, showing that people are prepared to come together and talk about the difficult issues in a safe and controlled environment

### **What happens if Mediation doesn't work?**

Mediation is an important time to reflect, take a step back, and move forward. Even without any agreement people often find mediation takes some of the stress out of the situation. If you want support to look at what you can do next and to help you to make a plan to move forward, we can provide you with individual conflict support sessions

### **What is Conflict Support?**

Conflict (CS) is a way of helping people to help themselves and encouraging them to think about what they can do to change how they feel about a situation. It may not lead to resolution of a specific conflict, but it may be enough for someone to be given the chance to understand a situation differently, to reconsider their role in the conflict and to empower them to create options as to how they choose to respond in the future.

### **What if I don't want to continue with Mediation?**

You can stop the process at absolutely any point. It's always your call – the ball is in your court.

### **How much does it cost me?**

The service is **free** to you and will not cost you anything

### **Why should I consider mediation?**

Mediation often produces very **creative** solutions to problems. A complaint about noise levels might involve sharing information about work patterns, discussing hours where quiet is needed and then making an agreement that takes this into account.

Mediation is an **empowering** process which gives the responsibility back to the people involved. Parties are involved in sorting out a solution that they think will work for them.

Mediation also **prevents future conflict** from taking place, because it encourages people to look to the future as well as the present. Mediators will try to help individuals to learn how to talk and listen to each other and **communicate better**. This means that when problems arise in the future, they may be able to work together on sorting out their own solution to the issues.

### **What can you help me with?**

These are few examples of what we can help with, but please just talk to us with your concerns and we will let you know if we help.

- ✓ Communication Difficulties between you and others
- ✓ Difficulties with Neighbours

- ✓ High Hedges & Boundaries
- ✓ Cultural Differences and misunderstandings
- ✓ Family & Intergenerational issues
- ✓ Boundaries and Expectations – Setting & Agreeing
- ✓ Conflict Support for Children & young people
- ✓ Lifestyle.
- ✓ Living with others

### **How can I find out more and get help?**

Just call us on 01494 520821 we are here to help

E-mail us at [mediation@mediationbucks.org.uk](mailto:mediation@mediationbucks.org.uk)