



# Our asb4 Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Service

This leaflet contains information on how mediation may be able to help you.

People can easily become involved in arguments with neighbours over all sorts of matters. Sometimes these arguments drag on and on and never end. In some cases they suddenly explode into a serious incident which may lead to the involvement of the Police or the Courts.

None of this is very good and may often lead to the people who are involved becoming anxious and depressed. Whatever the outcome, the people involved are usually going to remain neighbours and it is important that they can face each other without the risk of further upset.

## Could mediation be the answer?

- Is there trouble between you and your neighbour, or someone in your community?

## Do you experience problems with:

- Dogs barking, children's play, boundary disputes, parties, loud music, parking problems, neighbour disputes or football.



# asb4 Mediation Service can help

## What is mediation and how does it work?

Often the real problem is that communication has broken down and what may have started as a fairly minor problem can sometimes become a much bigger issue. If people cannot communicate with one another, how can problems be resolved?

Mediators working for the asb4 Mediation Service offer help by communicating between individuals in the dispute and helping them to deal with their problem.

**All our Mediators are fully qualified and can provide a fast and effective service when all individuals want to find a solution.**

### Mediators:

- Will talk to you in private, this is usually in your own home.
- Discuss any concerns in total confidence.
- Will listen to what everyone has to say about the problem.
- Help draw up an agreement that both parties are happy with.
- Discuss with you the way forward. This can either involve a face to face meeting, or, the Mediators may act as 'go-betweens'.
- Will not take sides or tell people what to do.

### What you need to do:

- Be willing to take part, along with everyone else involved in the problem.
- Be prepared to work towards a solution, that may involve some compromise.

## How can mediation help me?

By agreeing to take part in mediation you will have made the first positive step towards sorting the problem out. You may not become the best of friends, but you may get along better. Mediators will assist improved communication. By reaching an agreement through mediation, in future you will feel confident to deal with any issues which may occur. If additional support is required the Mediators will keep in touch for a while.

## Agreement

The people involved may decide on a written or verbal agreement. Any such agreements would not be legally binding, but are extremely effective because the content is decided by the parties themselves.

## Community Agreement or Good Neighbour Agreement

Our Mediation Team may also assist where there are problems within communities. By working with the community, a Community Agreement or Good Neighbour Agreement can be reached by consultation with residents. It aims to improve the quality of life for all. The area affected may be a block of flats, a street, a small community or a sheltered housing complex.

## Why do Community Agreements or Good Neighbour Agreements work?

Mediators will visit everyone involved, in their own home, to talk about the issues affecting them and other residents. All discussions are confidential. By discussing concerns with a mediator, individuals are given a voice and the opportunity to improve the quality of life within their community. An agreement can be drawn up based

on the suggestions and ideas of the residents on how they would like their environment to be. Such agreements are not legally binding, but can be very effective as they get to the root cause of the problems and the residents themselves decide the contents.

## Comments, Compliments and Complaints

If you have a suggestion on how we can improve our service, or feel you have not been treated in accordance with the standards set out within this leaflet, tell us about it by completing either a 'Comments, Compliments and Suggestions' form, or if you are unhappy with our service, ask for a copy of our leaflet 'Making a Complaint'. Further information on any of these schemes can be found on our individual leaflets available from our Area Office sites.

**Private householders within Coventry City boundary who are having problems with neighbours or other disturbances, should contact the asb4 Mediation Team to see if they are eligible for free funding.**



- M**ediation Helps to improve quality of life.
- E**ffective Mediation is a fast and effective way of resolving conflict.
- D**iscreet Any discussion of mediation will take place in private and confidentiality will be respected at all times.
- I**mpartial Mediators will not take sides
- A**lternative Mediation is an alternative way of resolving conflict.
- T**olerance Mediation helps us to become more tolerant.
- I**nformal Mediators will visit you in your home at a convenient time.
- O**pportunity This is your opportunity to put the past behind you and focus on a better future.
- N**eutral We do not take sides. The aim is to reduce conflict and reach a settlement.

