

Community Grant for Training from Watford Borough Council

Our training work continues to develop and grow. This year, Mediation Hertfordshire was granted funding to train local residents in Watford in conflict resolution skills. Watford Community Housing Trust offered to host the training. Following initial presentations to meetings of Tenants and Residents Associations, a small group of residents applied to attend the 4-week evening course which was specifically devised and delivered by two of our experienced and skilled mediators. The course was highly successful-engaging and challenging at the same time. Below are some quotes from those who attended;

“I now look deeper at both sides of the problem, I don’t take first impressions as gospel and I can listen in more depth about someone’s feelings and needs without losing my composure.”

“I now understand that I need to think about why people are acting in the way they are as there is always a reason behind someone’s behaviour.”

“I have learned that conflict can be positive, and that it is important to remain calm and try and find out, through open questions, what people’s interests and needs are.”



Dorothy Thornhill, elected Mayor of Watford, at the certificate presentation event for training participants. Dorothy was delighted to acknowledge residents’ achievements and praised them for their involvement.



Funders: Thanks as always go to all our funders, without whose support we would not be able to continue our valuable work:-

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Mediation Hertfordshire Annual Review 2008-2009



Peer Mediators from Camp School, St Albans, at an event to celebrate their achievements-with the Right Worshipful Mayors of Dacorum & St Albans, Cllrs Bert Pawle and Mrs Carol Green.



Manager’s Report

Two major developments characterise the last year; one is Mediation Hertfordshire’s successful bid to Children, Schools and Families, in partnership with Parentline Plus, to deliver a mediation service for parents and schools, where bullying issues remain unresolved. This pilot focussed on two areas of the county and the PLP outreach worker spent much of her time talking to groups and distributing information about the service. Mediation was successful in the majority of cases and funding has been renewed for 2009-10, with the service extended to cover the whole of Hertfordshire.

Our second area of work in schools is the Peer Mediation project, which we extended by introducing the Peer Researcher scheme. This development meant bringing together a number of schools which offer peer mediation, and preparing the young people to visit each other to learn about the way schemes are run in other schools-both to give feedback and to learn new ways of delivering their own service. Although arranging a date for a number of schools to come together was challenging, the results in terms of learning were encouraging. We hope to extend this project further over the coming 18 months as our funding for this work has also been extended and increased. Special thanks to Christine Key who has been a great advocate of peer mediation and has helped to make all this happen. *Maria Kraithman*

Chairs Report

This financial year began with disappointing news from one of our major funders of a substantial cut in its annual grant to us. The Manager and some Trustees were involved in talks to challenge this decision, supported by St Albans Centre for Voluntary Service. Although the cut in funding did go ahead, the service was able to state its case for effecting savings for the Local Authority by diverting cases from legal proceedings, and a further additional payment was received later in the financial year. We need to be aware, however, that Local Authorities are under increasing pressure to reduce their budgets, and our service could be at risk of further cuts as public funding comes under pressure.

The Board has seen the retirement of Jacqueline Dawson, who served the cause for many years and leaves us with grateful thanks, and welcomes a new member, James Copeman.

Thanks, as always, go to the staff who work diligently to offer good administrative backup and support to our large team of volunteer mediators. There have been a number of changes to the mediation team; we wish all those who have moved on well and thank them for their time and commitment. We thank our current team for their continued support and hard work on behalf of local communities. We welcome our new volunteers and recognise that their profile is changing to reflect the growing interest in mediation across many cultures and communities.

We look forward, as ever, to a more diverse and challenging future based on very firm foundations and the values we all share.

John Gunner, Chair

Highlights of the Year

- A successful bid is made to Watford Borough Council's Annual Fund to train residents in conflict resolution skills.
- New Service Level Agreements are set up with North Herts Homes and William Sutton Homes.
- Funding is received from Hertsmere Police for direct referrals from PCs and PCSOs.
- A successful regional training event is held with the Thames Valley Consortium.
- Action Learning Sets are introduced to support mediator practice.
- The Board begins work on Strategy Planning for the next 3 years.
- Funding from CSF for the Schools Project and Peer Mediation work is renewed and increased.

Financial Information

MEDIATION HERTFORDSHIRE LIMITED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
INCOME		
Grants and Earned Income	78,338	74,134
Interest Receivable	3,578	3,071
Donations	1,363	955
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	83,279	78,160
EXPENDITURE		
Society Expenses	77,199	71,746
Legal and Professional Fees	1,954	1,732
Depreciation	-	972
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	79,153	74,450
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>4,126</u>	<u>3,710</u>
GENERAL RESERVE		
Brought Forward	53,714	50,004
Surplus/(Deficit) For The Year	4,126	3,710
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance Carried Forward	57,840	53,714

A copy of Mediation Hertfordshire's full audited accounts is available on request.

Quotes from clients' feedback

"The service I received was good. Mediators were very friendly and treat you fairly as an individual."

"I think your service is very good. You help a lot of people. Your mediators are very polite and caring. Thank you for trying."

"I feel much better informed to make decisions about the way forward with the facts out in the open. I believe this process has taught me some valuable lessons, and hope this situation can be avoided in the future."

"The problem persists due to neighbours not being interested in mediation."

"I would like to express my thanks for your involvement in this matter. It's a pity the concerned neighbour did not have the decency to respond."

"The two ladies who visited me were excellent in every way."