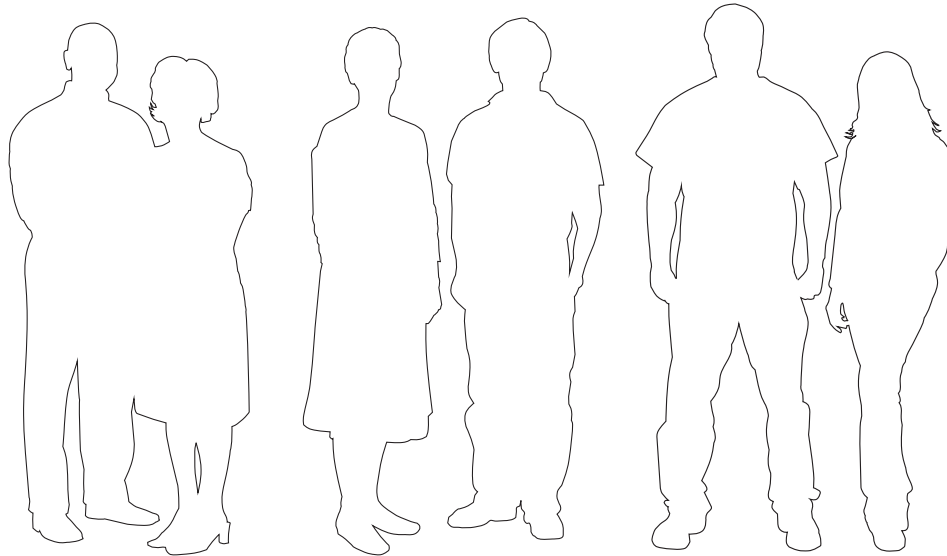


volunteers
information

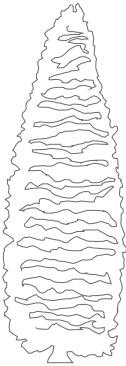
mediation Hertfordshire

Resolving Conflict + Rebuilding Relationships

volunteers information pack



mediation Hertfordshire volunteers information pack



Mediation Hertfordshire was launched as Mediation Dacorum in 1998 with the support of Dacorum Council, which saw a need for an independent service to offer help to residents in dispute.

A move to offices provided by Affinity Sutton Homes in 2003 provided the impetus to expand the service to other parts of Hertfordshire and a name change to Mediation Hertfordshire was made.

The organisation has been providing very successful neighbour mediation service for 14 years and has expanded its services into schools, training children as peer mediators and offering restorative meetings for school staff and parents. It can also mediate workplace disputes and help to resolve conflicts in a range of other situation.

Clients know the service to be reliable, professional and successful in terms of mediation outcomes. In 2007, Mediation Hertfordshire was successful in gaining the Community Legal Service Quality Mark, which reflects the hard work done by mediators, staff and Trustees to establish a high-quality service and offer this to residents seeking help wherever conflict may arise.

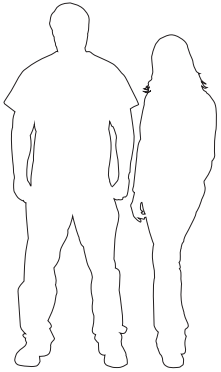
Mediation Hertfordshire is registered as a non-profit making company under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965. It has charitable objectives and is run by a democratically elected Board. It costs just £1 to become a member and membership is open to all who support the organisation's aims.

Community
Legal Service



information for Volunteer Mediators

Volunteers are fundamental to the work of Mediation Hertfordshire. They provide the mediation service and are the public face of the organisation. The use of volunteers reflects the Management Committee's commitment to an independent and impartial service. The Committee recognizes the importance of supporting volunteers as a valuable resource.



01. Volunteers - Potential mediators need to have good listening and communication skills, be able to act impartially and be self-aware. You should be able to work and interact with a wide range of people from varying backgrounds.

You must generally be over 16.

02. Time Commitment - Minimum Requirement

- ◆ Attendance at a minimum of 3 Round Table meetings a year. One of these can be in an observer role and one may be completed elsewhere. Obviously there will be flexibility - for example for mediators who are repeatedly unable to get beyond the initial
- ◆ Attendance at 2 Peer Support Meetings per year. These can consist of either whole team Peer Support Meetings or locality based Peer Support get togethers.

- ◆ Attendance at a minimum of one **CPD** (Continuing Personal Development) session in a year. This can be completed elsewhere but we would request that you forward a copy of an attendance certificate to the office in order for records to be updated.
- ◆ Attendance at 1 supervision a year. Further details will follow about arrangements for supervision in the early part of 2012

Due to the needs of clients the service must be flexible in the times that mediation is carried out. This flexibility is achieved through a diversity of mediators, meaning that the exact timing of your commitment can be negotiated and renegotiated to suit your own individual commitments. We also ask that mediators stay with the service for at least one year following the training course.

information for Volunteer Mediators

03. Mediating:

- ◆ Mediators will work in pairs to mediate neighbour disputes referred and accepted by the service.
- ◆ Volunteers can only begin to mediate once they have completed a basic training programme.
- ◆ The process of mediation first involves meeting the parties in the dispute separately. Then with all parties' consent a full, or round table, mediation can take place.
- ◆ Initial meetings occur in the client's home. Round table mediations occur in a neutral venue near the clients' homes.

04. Support - Support for mediators is an important part of the service's commitment to its volunteers. Both individual support and team support are given. Mediators will be expected to attend support meetings on a regular basis.

05. The Training Programme - Mediators will be expected to undertake both initial and ongoing training. The initial training programme will last approximately 35-40 hours over 6 days. Courses may be run at weekends or one weekday over a period of six weeks.

The training course will cover the following mediation skills and principles.

- ◆ Impartiality
- ◆ Creating Trust
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Flexibility
- ◆ Equal Opportunities
- ◆ Listening Skills
- ◆ Presentation Skills
- ◆ Self Awareness
- ◆ Confidentiality
- ◆ Management of the Interaction

More details of the training course will be given when recruitment is underway.

06. Expenses - Mediation Hertfordshire will pay mediators all reasonable expenses. This may include childcare costs and taxis, but please note that in these instances prior permission must be sought.

information for Volunteer Mediators

07. Quality Assurance - Mediation Hertfordshire aims to offer appropriate training to mediators in order for them to provide a high quality and impartial mediation service. Mediators are asked to continually assess their own skills in order to provide a high quality service.

Mediation Hertfordshire has achieved the Community Legal Services Quality Mark. Individual mediators are encouraged to compile a portfolio of their cases and submit these for assessment. The service will support mediators in preparing a portfolio following their initial training. There will be regular opportunities to reflect on and talk about cases through peer supervision and team meetings.

08. Legal Issues - Mediators do not provide legal advice to clients.

Mediators are volunteers. Whilst we ask for a minimum commitment of time, this should not be understood to constitute any form of employment contract. Mediators work as volunteers with people in dispute. This involves offering the parties the opportunity to use mediation,

giving each party an equal opportunity to express their views. This assists both parties to address the problems between them in order to improve matters in the future.

Mediator Responsibilities

Mediators are expected to be available to take at least five cases in any one year and work with a co-mediator on cases, which includes:

- ◆ Following the service's practice standards when dealing with cases
- ◆ Reading any relevant paperwork
- ◆ Attending meetings with the parties
- ◆ Holding a pre-meeting with the co-mediator to discuss the case

Community Mediator role description

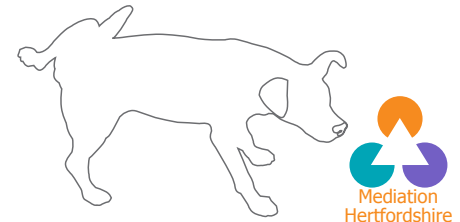
Mediator Responsibilities cont...

- ◆ Evaluating the mediation with the co-mediator
 - ◆ Undertaking any follow-up administration with regard to the case
 - ◆ Maintain confidentiality about cases
 - ◆ Attend regular supervision sessions and team meetings *
 - ◆ Attend training events provided
 - ◆ Provide any general feedback to the Service Manager when requested.
- * Please refer to the section under [Minimum Requirements](#)

The Service's Responsibilities

The Service will provide to a mediator:

- ◆ All reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses associated with cases and training, at 45p per mile
- ◆ Initial training as a community mediator
- ◆ Annual training covering topics agreed by the service and mediation team
- ◆ Emergency supervision, as required
- ◆ Insurance
- ◆ A listening ear



person specification for a Volunteer Mediators



Knowledge and Experience

Some disputes are complex and many are highly emotionally charged. Mediators are required to meet and work with people who are distressed and angry, but also anxious and feeling vulnerable. It is useful to have had experience in a listening, counselling or negotiating role, though such a background is not a prerequisite.

Skills Required

- ◆ Active listening, summarising and paraphrasing.
- ◆ Reflecting back meanings and feelings.
- ◆ Good communication skills.
- ◆ Independent facilitation of the parties to reach a conclusion, to which they all agree.
- ◆ Ability to handle conflict.
- ◆ Maintaining confidentiality.
- ◆ Working as part of a team.

Attributes

- ◆ A mature approach
- ◆ Sensitivity and sincerity to people's differing needs and views
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Empathy, without taking sides
- ◆ Availability
- ◆ Tact
- ◆ Commitment
- ◆ Punctuality
- ◆ Willingness to participate in training
- ◆ Willingness to attend mediator support meetings

Mediation is a voluntary process and so relies on the active participation of the parties. If this is given, mediation can be very successful. The following case study illustrates one example of a successful mediation.



The young family complained of noise nuisance caused by their recently widowed neighbour leaving her radio on when she left the house. This extended to leaving the radio on twenty-four hours a day when she went to stay with relatives at the weekends. The young family found the noise disturbing, especially as one of the children had recently undergone surgery following a long and painful serious illness. The child's sleep and rest during the day and early evening were being disturbed by the constant noise from the radio.

The mother of the young family approached her neighbour about the problem but no satisfactory solution had been reached. The family's social worker had also made an approach but this had not been fruitful. The social worker suggested mediation and contacted the local mediation service.

does mediation work?

The social worker telephoned the mediation service who then contacted the mother of the young family and arranged a home visit for the following day. The next day a letter was sent to the neighbour who phoned the mediation service and was visited the following week. There was a further visit to the young family, and finally a face-to-face meeting session was arranged.

In the face-to-face meeting, the mother was able to inform her neighbour about her son's illness and treatment and explain how the noise was affecting the family. The neighbour was able to explain that since she had been widowed she had a fear of entering a silent house and an even greater fear of finding her home burgled. She said that she left her radio on to give the impression that someone was at home and to prevent her having to enter a silent house.

...does mediation work?

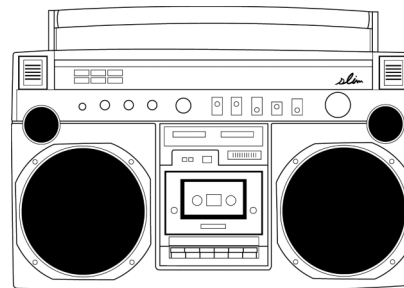
After listening to her neighbour and the problems of their child's illness she also accepted for the first time how her actions were affecting her neighbours. She said that her family had insisted that she had a burglar alarm installed after the death of her husband but explained that she never used it for fear of it 'going off' while she was away from home.

In the meeting it was agreed that she would use the burglar alarm rather than leaving the radio on. It was also agreed that a contact number and whereabouts would be left with the mother of the young family if required. The family received a full apology from the neighbours for the distress she had caused and both parties left the meeting on good terms.

A month after the meeting the mediators received a 'Thank you card' from both parties. Follow-up contact six months after the meeting revealed that both parties were still enjoying a good relationship.

This dispute is typical of many neighbourhood disputes in that the main complaint was noise-related and had to do with the fact that the parties' lifestyles were not entirely compatible. Mediation may also be used in cases relating to disputes over car parking, children, rubbish, fences, pets and many other issues.

What happens now?



what happens now?

Volunteer Recruitment & Selection

There will be an information meeting before training begins, to which volunteers will be invited. This will explain in more detail what the training involves and the commitment required. The training includes an assessment carried out by the Trainer at the end of the course, as to each trainee's suitability to become a mediator - a reference will be requested

Training Costs

Although our aim is to cover the costs of training for volunteers, pressure on our funding resources means that this cannot be guaranteed in the future. If charges are made, they will be kept to a minimum to cover our costs. More information will be available when recruitment is underway.

When we run training courses all trainees will be expected to attend all 6 sessions of the training (generally run over two weekends Saturday, Sunday and Monday). This course will cover the mediation process and the skills used by mediators. It will provide sufficient basic training to enable participants to mediate. There will then be an induction process, with each trainee attending cases with an experienced mediator. Ongoing training will be arranged to cover further mediation skills.

Mediation Hertfordshire is aware that mediation training can be both demanding and time consuming. However, once the training is completed all mediating is arranged by appointment and is extremely flexible. For your convenience the course is designed to provide full and informative training within a compact timeframe.

If mediating is not for you

If you have decided not to become a mediator, why not consider volunteering for Mediation Hertfordshire in some other way, for example as a member of the Management Committee, or becoming a member of Mediation Hertfordshire for £1. Being a member of Mediation Hertfordshire shows your support for the organisation and members are also permitted one vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Alternatively, to discuss other possible voluntary opportunities you can contact:

- ◆ **St Albans Volunteer Centre**
Tel. (01727) 852657
- ◆ **Dacorum Volunteer Centre**
Tel. (01442) 247209



Volunteer Information Pack reply form

**Please complete the application form
and return it to the office by e-mail or post:**

I would like to *(Tick as necessary):*

- ◆ Become a volunteer mediator and be contacted about training dates prior to the next course
- ◆ Become a member of Mediation Hertfordshire and enclose £1
- ◆ Discuss other ways in which I could volunteer with Mediation Hertfordshire

*You are very welcome to give us feedback on the
Information Pack:*

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Name:.....

Address.....

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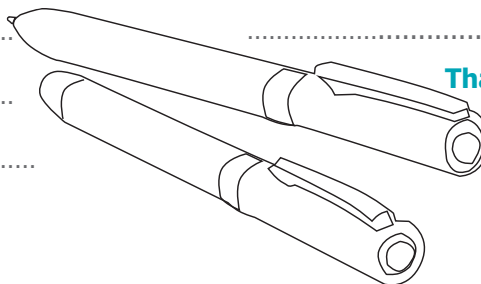
Home phone:.....

Mobile phone:.....

E-mail address.....

Where did you hear about volunteering for
Mediation Hertfordshire?

.....
.....



Thank you for completing this form



mediation Hertfordshire

return to: 3 Halsey Drive, Gadebridge, Hemel Hempstead HP1 3SE
or email your application as an attachment to:
help@mediationherts.org.uk all emails responses will be acknowledged.

Application Form - Volunteer Mediator

Surname:.....

Forenames:.....

Address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Daytime phone:.....

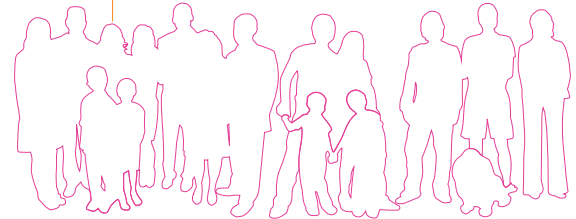
Home phone:.....

Mobile phone:.....

E-mail address:.....

Do you hold a full driving license? Yes/No

Community Mediation
"Private & Confidential"



Resolving Conflict + Rebuilding Relationships

Are you in good physical & mental health? Yes/No

If no, please give detail

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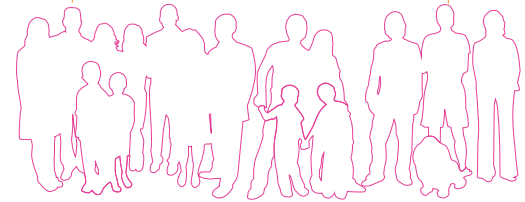
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Application Form - Volunteer Mediator

Community Mediation
"Private & Confidential"



Resolving Conflict + Rebuilding Relationships

Relevant Experience:

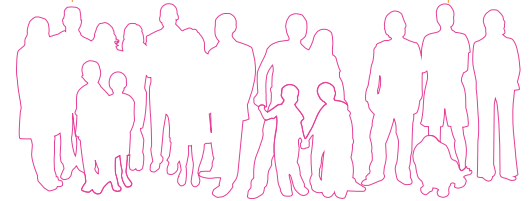
Please state what skills and attributes you have, please see **Person Specification**, which would assist in your role as a mediator.

cont over...

mediation Hertfordshire

Application Form - Volunteer Mediator

Community Mediation
"Private & Confidential"



References:

Please give the name and address of a referee who can give a character reference.
References will be taken up after completion of the training.

Mr Mrs Miss Ms or Dr please state

Name:.....

Position:.....

Address:.....

Postcode:..... I have known this person forYears

I confirm that, to the best of my belief and knowledge, the particulars on this form are true and complete.

Signed.....

Date

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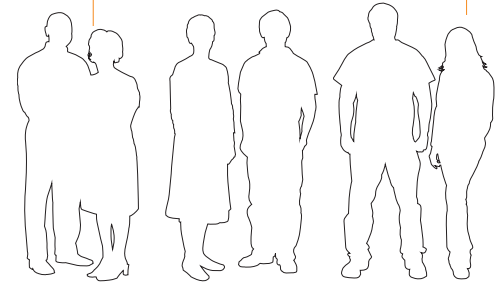


mediation Hertfordshire

Equal Opportunities Recruitment Monitoring Policy

Mediation Hertfordshire is committed to an EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY and through this policy and its supporting practices is striving to become a full equal opportunities employer. In view of this each applicant is assessed without regard to sex, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability. To help check the working of the policy Mediation Hertfordshire Management Committee records separately the race, sex and disability of people who apply for its jobs. This information will in no way affect consideration of your application for volunteering. **Thank you for your assistance.**

Community Mediation
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Title of the position applied for:.....

Surname.....

Forenames.....

Male Female

Are you registered disabled?* Yes No

Have you any unregistered disability? Yes No

* Please give registration number

Please circle the ethnic origin that best describes you:

- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Black-African | Black-Caribbean | Black-UK | Black-Other |
| Bangladeshi | Chinese | Indian | Asian-Other |
| White-UK | White-European | White-Other | |

If you wish to specify your ethnic origin in greater detail, or differently to the descriptions shown, please use the space provided below:

