* **All page titles / menu titles are in big green type**
* **Any further input required / gaps / clarity is in bold red**
* **Any instructions on links / format etc are in bold purple**
* **At some points you’ll see some quotes – these are taken from testimonials and can be used with a little speech bubble graphic so that they bring some colour and break up content on the page.**

**HOMEPAGE  
(top level message introducing mediation, MESH as the experts and the services you offer):**

**Conflict is normal – we deal with it in small ways every single day.**   
Sometimes though, it can have life-changing impact, breaking down work or personal relationships, stopping us from recognising what’s best and causing real stress, for ourselves and the people around us.

When we can’t see a way out, mediation can help.

MESH is a charity that has been mediating for over 30 years, helping hundreds of families, employees, neighbours and whole communities look for and find an end to their conflict.

**How can mediation help?**Just by giving everyone a fair chance to be heard, mediators can guide you to the best way forward. In many cases mediation saves people having to go through costly legal proceedings, saving time, lots of money and often allowing you more say in the outcomes than a court would allow.

You can look through the information on our site or call to find out more about mediation and if it could help you.

**Footer:**

**MESH Community Cohesion Services   
Company No. 06340396  
Charity No. 1121249**

**About MESH and mediation**

**MESH’s story**

MESH opened in 1989 as a charity dedicated to improving local lives and communities through mediation. Years of experience has shown us that mediation offers an effective way out of most conflict: it helps people, their relationships, careers and even whole communities to thrive and get stronger. We really believe in helping this to happen – it’s a benefit to all local people.

Our small staff team of outstanding mediators guide people out of family and relationship disputes, conflict in the workplace, or with neighbours and even across whole communities. MESH is also a recognised centre of excellence in mediator training. This includes training volunteers and frontline service providers in neighbour mediation skills and practices, giving them the skills to negotiate, deal with difficult people and situations.

Our mission is to lead people through conflict to resolution, and to impart skills to avoid conflict in future, giving us all the best chance of health, happiness and progress.

**We’re proud to partner with these organisations to deliver mediation:**

**PARTNER LOGOS**

**Our people**

**Our mediators:**

**Jenny Owen** is anassociate mediator, conflict coach and trainer and works in family, workplace and neighbourhood mediation. An accredited and experienced mediator, she also delivers training and coaching to help others, including community leaders and volunteers, to deliver quality mediation.

**Our trustees:**Jo Buchanan is a retired local GP with over 30 years’ experience here, both in practice and in education for GPs across the region with a special interest in conflict and mental health.

**Our services**

**MESH offers a range of adaptable conflict resolution training and mediation services for all kinds of people and situations.**

**The following should link to specific pages for more information – so need to make clear that a click through will take to further info…**

**Family mediation**

* separation and divorce settlements
* custody of children
* childcare arrangements
* access and visiting rights
* relationship issues and communication breakdowns
* inheritance disputes and other family matters

**Workplace mediation**

* disputes between work colleagues
* disputes arising from unfair treatment or mismanagement
* issues over employment conditions and payments
* contractual disputes
* equality and diversity issues
* other workplace matters

**Neighbour mediation**

* boundaries and rights of access
* unsociable behaviour
* noise, parking, harassment
* other neighbour dispute matters

**Community conflict**

* developing and delivering community cohesion projects
* mediating community disputes
* partnerships with outside agencies, such as the police

**Training, coaching and workshops**

* bespoke sessions to help you mediate in your workplace or setting
* training for professionals and volunteers in frontline positions
* From our recognised centre of excellence

**All about mediation (FAQ)**

***What is mediation?***

Mediation is a way of sorting out your dispute using talking, listening, and co-operation with the help of people with an outside perspective. Our approach uses ‘transformative mediation’, which means that people leave us with the skills to help them handle and avoid conflict in future. Mediators facilitate conversations but won’t make judgments or tell you what to do – instead mediation gives you the questions, insight and support to find and agree your own direction.

***How does it work?***

Mediators don’t take sides – they help people to find new ways to look at their challenges and respond to them. Often people feel differently just knowing they will have the chance to speak and be listened to, without judgement – it can make it easier to think of new ways to deal with conflicts that have been building over time, or have just become stuck.   
  
Our approach works like this:

1. Our mediators meet with each person involved in a dispute, listen to them and help them decide what they want to do next.
2. The next step might involve the mediator taking information to the other person / people involved, or it might mean setting up a meeting so everyone can talk and listen together.
3. Control over the process always stays with the people involved.
4. Quite often, solutions come naturally from people talking calmly and openly with each other, with a mediator present, ‘unblocking’ the dispute so they can agree a solution.
5. Agreements are made by choice – they are not legally binding and can’t be ‘enforced’, but they are usually honoured because they are the best way to resolve their conflict.

***How will I know if it could work for me?***

Mediation doesn’t work in all situations but it helps in most, so we always start with determining whether mediation is right for you, which we’ll do in a phone conversation before we take on your case. Mediation can be used at any point during a conflict, including during the early stages of disputes and after separation, divorce or workplace disputes.

***I’ve been told I need a MIAM – can MESH help?***

Yes – a MIAM, or a Mediation Advice and Information Meeting is something that courts require before an application to court can be made in cases of separation and divorce. A MIAM proves that you have discussed the option of mediation, which is the way the courts prefer you to resolve family disputes such as divorce settlements and access to children, and is also much less costly than court proceedings.

A MIAM session will end either with an agreement to further mediation sessions, or the mediator will issue a MIAM form to instruct the courts that mediation is unlikely to resolve matters. You are then able to issue court proceedings.

We’re sorry that at present we are unable to take on Legal Aid cases.

***Does mediation mean I need to sit with the person I’m in conflict with?***

No. It’s often inappropriate for parties to be in the same space and if people really don’t feel comfortable together then we can run separate mediation sessions. Mediation can still be an effective way to resolve conflict even if you are not in the same room. Sometimes, two mediators work on a case and come together to discuss your dispute on your behalf.

***What does a mediation session involve?***

We’ll shape our sessions to suit you and your circumstances, but they usually involve a balance of talking and understanding and work a bit like this:

* Whether you’re meeting in the same room at the same time, or separately, your mediator will ‘facilitate’ your conversation, so everyone gets the chance to speak.
* They keep the conversation focused on problem solving, not allowing and one party to dominate and keeping it as calm as possible.
* They will summarise understanding as you go along, so what everyone means is checked, clear and agreed.
* Your mediator might ask questions as a way to discuss and agree priorities, find common ground and to make sure you understand other perspectives.
* The sessions are relaxed and safe. Everything you say is confidential and it’s your mediator’s job to be constructive, supportive and neutral.
* An ‘outcomes statement’ will be sent to you following your mediation session, summarising what has been discussed and agreed by both parties.
* Because it’s our aim to keep the mediation process as short as possible, you’ll review the progress you’ve made and could collectively decide that you have made an agreement you’re both going to work to, and that you don’t need any further sessions.
* Alternatively, you might be advised, or request to continue to another session.

***How are mediators qualified to do this?***

All of our mediators are both professionally qualified and highly experienced. You can find out more about our mediators and their skills and experience **(links to our people section). More accreditation etc info required.**

**Family mediation**

**Could family mediation help you?**

**Mediation can help in all kinds of family conflict and we most often mediate with couples going through divorce or separation.**

**Mediation can help to settle disputes over issues such as:**

* Who will live where
* Who children will live with, when will they see the other parent
* What the financial arrangements should be
* Whether lawyers should be used and if there should be any Court proceedings
* Inheritance and other disputes within the family

And it can help at any point, even if you are now trying to work through a conflict that has been building over a long time.

**What happens in family mediation?**

* We start with a phone conversation to see if mediation is appropriate or likely to help, and if it is, each person must have a MIAM (Mediation Advice and Information Meeting).
* In the mediation sessions, your mediator ensures that your side of the story is heard, encourages open minds and an understanding of all perspectives, making sure that outcomes are understood and agreed.
* The sessions won’t focus on the details of your conflict – it’s about giving you the tools to work through the challenge yourself.
* The agreements you reach are made by choice – they are not legally binding and can’t be ‘enforced’, but agreements are usually honoured because people understand them as the best way to resolve their conflict.
* Your mediator can’t give you legal information; if you want legal advice from a solicitor, we can help you find one.
* Most sessions work towards drawing up an agreement. An ‘outcomes statement’ summarises what has been discussed and agreed by both parties.
* Your mediator will talk to you after each session about what is needed next, with aim of keeping the mediation process as short as possible and reaching a positive lasting agreement.

**How much does it cost?**

Each session lasts one hour, costing £75 per person. In many cases, just one MIAM and one joint meeting is all it takes to break or resolve conflict, so it often ends up being much less costly than court proceedings and legal fees.

**Workplace mediation**

**Could workplace mediation help you?**

**Conflict at work is commonplace – it costs businesses an estimated £33 billion each year. It also accounts for almost 20% of leadership time, and almost 370 million lost working days and reduces wellbeing and staff retention.**

But many workplace disputes, tackled early and in the right way, are easily solvable. We can help with disputes over:

* Bullying or harassment allegations
* Disagreements about roles or changing responsibilities
* Cultural or lifestyle difference and even personality clashes
* And almost any situation of conflict at work that hampers productivity, work satisfaction or a healthy culture in the workplace.

**What happens in workplace mediation?**

* We’ll begin with a phone call to each party to assess the likely effectiveness of mediation.
* Then the mediator will meet each party separately, and if appropriate we’ll progress to a joint meeting, which will happen at your workplace or our city centre office.
* The mediation session is informal and as relaxed as possible. It will involve talking, listening, and the discussion of an agreement, facilitated by the mediator.
* Everyone will get the chance to talk and share their point of view, without judgement. You won’t be told what to do – the mediator will facilitate a discussion that leads to participants agreeing their own way forward.
* If necessary and agreed, we’ll arrange further sessions.
* Once an agreement has been reached between the parties involved, it will be shared with the manager who referred the case.
* The agreements you reach are made by choice – they are not legally binding and can’t be ‘enforced’, but agreements are usually honoured because people understand them as the best way to resolve their conflict.

**How much does it cost?**

Case costs begin at under £800 and can usually be resolved in just three or four meetings, making mediation much more desirable than costly tribunals, or the impact of losing good staff, reputation and productivity levels. We can come to your workplace or deliver mediation in our Sheffield city centre office.

**Neighbour mediation**

**Could neighbour mediation help you?**

**Sometimes it can be difficult to talk to your neighbour or someone who lives nearby about an issue that is bothering you. Perhaps you think they won't listen. Maybe you worry things will be said that will make matters worse. You may even have tried to talk to them already.**

**Mediation can help with all kinds of disputes, including:**

* Boundaries and access
* Noise and unsociable behaviour
* Bullying and harassment

**There are two way to access our neighbour mediation services:**

1. If you are a Sheffield City Council Housing tenant, you may be referred by your housing officer and you’ll access the service for free. If your neighbour doesn’t agree to mediation we can still offer you some conflict coaching to help you deal with the ongoing situation.
2. If you are a private tenant or home owner , there will be a charge for mediation services. You will also need to have discussed and agreed to try mediation with your neighbour. To help, **download a leaflet to invite your neighbour** to try mediation as a way to resolve your dispute. If you are both willing to try it, you can **download and complete a neighbour mediation referral form**.

**What happens in neighbour mediation?**

* If you have been referred to us by a Housing Officer, we will call you for an initial assessment and if your case is accepted two mediators will visit you at home and support you through the mediation process.
* If you come to us as private clients, you will first be contacted by a mediator for an assessment and then invited to our office to attend an individual session with the mediator.
* Both referred and private clients with then, if appropriate, be invited to attend a joint meeting with the neighbour. If you are a council tenant this will be held at a neutral venue somewhere near where you live. If you are a private client you will be invited again to attend the MESH office.
* There are alternatives to face to face meetings together but they are encouraged.
* Participation is voluntary and the outcome of sessions will be summarised and eventually an agreement document drawn up. Each party will receive a copy.
* If your case has been referred by the Council, this agreement WILL NOT be shared with them in full. We may share some key agreements with your housing officer but most of what has been discussed remains confidential.
* The agreement document summarises what you have agreed and captures how the way you feel might have changed – it gives both parties something to work on and acts as a reminder of what has been agreed. They are not legally binding and can’t be ‘enforced’, but agreements are usually honoured because they work.
* Approximately 8 weeks after the completion of mediation you will be contacted again to see how things are working out.

**How much does it cost?**As a charity, our costs are less than many commercial organisations, as we are not profit-driven.For tenants of Sheffield City Council the service is free, providing the council housing officer asks MESH to take the case.

For private tenants or homeowners the cost of neighbour mediation is £95 per person per session, so the minimum amount it will cost you will be £190 each, covering an initial and follow-up session. If additional sessions are required these too will be charged at £95 per hour per person. We expect most cases to be resolved within 2-3 sessions, which is why this is often preferable to people than potentially very expensive court cases.

**Quotes to be used on page:**

*“I visited the tenants of the properties yesterday, they had been referred for mediation in May 2019 which resulted in a positive outcome… and the tenants have just exchanged Christmas cards. I thought it would be nice to feed back to you on a success story.”*

**Housing officer**

*“The mediator dealing with the case was very helpful and did a fantastic job of resolving the issues”.*

**Housing officer**

**Community cohesion**

**Sometimes conflict runs through whole neighbourhoods and communities, and can affect lots of lives. Since 2005 we have had projects funded to work alongside local groups, facilitating dialogue and development in communities experiencing substantial change and conflicts between groups, or between the statutory agencies and members of the community. We refer to this as community cohesion work.**

**How we help**

When dealing with communities in conflict, the core principles of mediation still apply: we listen to all sides, we value their contribution, we help people find their own solutions by helping them identify common ground and shared interests.

**Our carefully co-ordinated approach involves:**

* Delivering workshops and training to help people to gain the skills to resolve conflict within their own communities
* Working with other agencies to promote community cohesion
* Tackling fragmentation by responding rapidly to situations as they arise
* Working with individuals and groups in neighbourhoods
* Reporting formally and informally to those with strategic roles
* Helping to analyse and interpret situations
* Identifying recurring patterns and recommending interventions to avoid escalation

We work with commissioners and collaborators to deliver our community cohesion projects. These include Sheffield City Council and South Yorkshire Police and current funders include The Big Lottery Community Fund and South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit.

**(use logos / link to outside sites in new window?)**

**Our community projects**

**We’re delivering these projects, which use mediation to make a lasting positive impact on communities. Marie – I can’t find these pages – if you send me links I can use the copy to write intros about the projects…**

**RUBIC**

**StreetTalk**

**MESH is the host of the Cohesion Advisory Group, a collective of community groups working together for a cohesive Sheffield.**

[**https://www.meshccs.org.uk/cag**](https://www.meshccs.org.uk/cag)

**Training and coaching**

**We offer professional training to those interested in becoming mediators, as well as informal conflict coaching to anyone who wants help to get through a dispute, either over the phone or face to face in a 1-to-1 session. Here’s what we can do for you:**

**Workplace mediation training**

* Our proven mediation training for small groups can be adapted to accommodate your own business practices and processes, so it fits with your way of working.
* Bespoke half day sessions start at just £250
* More tailored, in-depth solutions can deliver the skills to make a lasting impact on conflict handling within your business.
* We’ll cover recognising warning signs, understanding the causes of conflict, getting communication flowing, navigating challenging situations, confidence in tackling communication breakdowns, encouraging openness and reflection, and tools for mediating.

**Conflict Resolution training**

* Wherever you work or volunteer you could have to face the challenge of conflict.
* Our training will help you better recognise and deal with conflict, with basic tools for resolving conflict and helping you in your role with challenging situations or difficult conversations.

**Conflict coaching**

* Conflict coaching can support you through conflict at work, with neighbours of family, giving you the tools, techniques, support and confidence to manage it better.
* Our conflict coaching service allows you to spend time 1-to-1 with an experienced, qualified conflict coach.
* It could help you through a current challenge, and to avoid or manage conflict in the future.  
  We offer over the phone coaching at £30 per half hour, or face to face sessions at our city centre office for £40 per half hour / £60 per hour.

Click here to fill out a form, pay for the session and we will get back to you to book in your session.

**Is there a better mechanism for getting these booked? - this is tricky as this is new…...so not sure how it will work!! I’m not sure I’d just book and pay online, at this point, and be happy to wait for you to call me to book…does it work?** Keeping this in because I think it’s an issue – probably best discussed in the site scoping / functionality with Kat / Tom / etc.

**MESH workshops**

We deliver regular workshops in Sheffield, covering a range of mediation skills and conflict issues. **Register / sign up for newsletters** and you’ll be kept up to date on forthcoming events.

**Quotes to be used on page:**

*“I gained confidence in when/how to complete referral and also how to support tenants with conflict.”*

*“She was a great trainer, I like her teaching style and inclusive approach.”*

*“The training definitely provided an excellent understanding of the skills needed for mediating. The training style was dynamic and flexible and I felt I got a great grounding.”*

***“****Before doing this training I would naturally have started to raise my voice in a conflict but now I have learnt to find the middle ground by considering my position, considering the opposing position and looking at commonalities between them.”*

*“I have improved my mediation skills as a result of the training and even though I have been active in the community for a while it has enabled me to think about how to speak with others and avoid becoming involved in disputes particularly with other professionals.”*

**Resources**

**Resources for families**

**Resources for workplace**

**Resources for neighbours and communities**-neighbour mediation information form **(I need to write with your input)**

-neighbour mediation agreement form **(I need to write with your input)**

**Support us**

**How you can help**

**Contact**

**Reach us**