

Will mediation cost me anything?

- **No** – Freebridge Community Housing will fund in full the cost of providing the mediation service, even if many meetings are required in order for the mediation to be successful.
- The only investment Freebridge Community Housing asks of you for mediation is your time and commitment

What will happen next if I refuse mediation?

If you refuse to participate in mediation, this option can no longer be followed as we must have consent from all parties to proceed.

In view of the fact that the nature of the complaint/report Freebridge Community Housing has received is that of a dispute between neighbours, with no behaviour or conduct existing that can be seen as a breach of Tenancy Agreement conditions, no further involvement or action from Freebridge Community Housing as landlord would be appropriate.

This position would then only change should we receive further reports of incidents or behaviour that does, in our view, then represent a breach of Tenancy Agreement conditions and for which evidence can be found.

At this point, Freebridge Community Housing would once again become involved and proceed with action against the party identified as behaving in a deliberately Anti-Social manner, provided that sufficient evidence was available.

IF YOU NEED ANY HELP TO UNDERSTAND THIS LEAFLET, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

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Office Opening Hours:
8:45am - 5.15pm (Mon-Thurs)
8:45am - 4.45pm (Fri)
Bank Holidays, Saturday and Sunday Closed

Out of Office Hours:
The main telephone number (03332 404 444) will divert to our 24 hour emergency service.

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MEDIATION OPTIONS

WE ARE HERE TO HELP



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WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation is a process whereby communication is 'brokered' and facilitated between people involved in a dispute to find a solution that is acceptable to them.

This communication can, initially, be on a 'shuttle' basis, with each party (person/s) involved in the dispute speaking individually with the mediator, with thoughts/feelings/views then communicated to the other party by the mediator.

Matters can then progress – providing that the mediator thinks this will be constructive – to a face-to-face, 'round the table' meeting of the parties involved in the dispute, chaired and facilitated by the mediator.

As the landlord, Freebridge Community Housing on occasions – depending on the nature and/or severity of the situation involved – will consider acting as the mediator itself in certain disputes between neighbours in which claims of Neighbour Nuisance/Anti-Social Behaviour are being made.

Alternatively, and certainly if it is the wish of any of the tenants involved, we might consider that a fully independent, external organisation is required to act as mediator.

The success of mediation depends most importantly on one factor – that those involved in it have a genuine wish for it to succeed in terms of resolving their dispute. Mediation cannot be forced upon anyone who does not wish to take part.

When does Freebridge Community Housing decide to offer mediation?

Freebridge Community Housing offer mediation as an option in accordance with our 'Neighbour Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy'.

We offer this in situations when the nature of the nuisance/annoyance is insufficient to allow action against any tenant on the basis of their Tenancy Agreement being breached, as judged reasonably against the definition of Neighbour Nuisance/Anti-Social Behaviour contained within our Policy.

Mediation can be especially useful in circumstances of a 'one-on-one' dispute – when two neighbours are dissatisfied with each other in some way, but where no nuisance or annoyance is being caused to anyone else.

In such cases, approaches other than mediation are difficult, as obtaining evidence to prove that one neighbour or the other is to "blame", or more responsible for poor relations than the other, is very hard for the landlord. In such situations a cycle of 'tit for tat', retaliatory behave has often set in.

How will mediation work?

Once both/all parties have agreed to participate, Freebridge Community Housing will find a mediation provider. If appropriate, and if all parties involved are content with this, this may be ourselves as landlord 'internally', or alternatively via an independent, impartial third party organisation ('externally').

The mediator will then visit both/all parties involved – mainly to gather information and gain a clear idea of the nature and seriousness of the dispute.

Depending upon this, the mediation provider will then arrange either a 'round the table meeting' of all parties involved to talk together – or will instead "shuttle" between the parties. This means that further meetings will take place between each neighbour and the mediator.

These meetings will continue until such time as an agreement and 'common ground' can be found between the neighbours involved in the dispute.

The aim is to establish effective communication between the parties, as well as mutual respect and understanding – this should both resolve the dispute presently happening and prevent further ones from happening and "getting out of hand".