

# Mediate

Newsletter of Tower Hamlets Mediation Service



Hanna Bibi, our Trainer and Outreach Worker facilitates budding young mediators at Mulberry School (see over)

## Is mediation for me?

Mediation is all about you. It is a people-focused process for making the most of conflict. In a world where conflict is inevitable, we are excited about helping people use the power and potential of difficult situations to do great things. We aim not simply to resolve issues, but to build better relationships

## Investing in the future

In addition to the peer mediation training described over the page we have delivered peer mentoring training, leadership, conflict awareness and conflict resolution workshops for young people at Summer University, Ebrahim College and Darul Hadith Latifa School. Everything we

## Strong foundations

*"I enjoy playing a role in my local community. I learn something every time I do it."*

So says one of our volunteer mediators, ordinary people who live, work or study in the borough who do something extraordinary with their neighbours. If you'd like to train as a mediator this Autumn, please call us on 020 7702 8305. The training is fun, friendly and open to all who share the motivation of another of our current volunteers who said, *"I want to build peace in the place where I live - that's why I'm involved with THMS."*

Our course will run at the weekends at our Toby Club address. Come and join us - we'd love to work with you!

## A tale of two neighbours

Our trained mediators visit residents in conflict in their homes. We meet with each party to the dispute separately, listening carefully to their feelings and issues and encourage them to generate options as to ways forward. Where possible we bring together both parties in a neutral environment to discuss the conflict and reach an agreement. Here is what two neighbours said after mediation:

*"We are communicating as neighbours and friends. Mediation gave me the chance to see the situation in a different light. It's good to be able to talk to people that are outside the situation that have good communication abilities."*

*"I am so impressed with the mediation service, people taking time out to help others. I want to give something back so I'd like to train as a mediator."*

*"I want to build peace in the place where I live."*

Volunteer mediator

and make Tower Hamlets a more peaceful place to live. It's not about giving answers. It's about giving you back the power to take control of your life. It might start with a noisy neighbour or kids on your estate who scare you. It might be your residents' association at each others' throats. It might be the noise from a neighbour or a friend with whom you've fallen out. We passionately believe that everyone in conflict - from nations at war to neighbours fighting over noise - have the potential to find peaceful solutions. Mediation is about you. To find out more call 020 7702 8305.

do works towards a vision of a peaceful future where conflict is confronted creatively. The young people of this borough are an inspiration and the key to sustaining that vision now and in years to come.



Tower Hamlets is an energetic place with a great diversity of cultures and people. It also has some of the highest rates of overcrowding and lowest income levels. That creates a heady mix leading to both creativity and conflict.



## Mulberry Girls on mediation crash course

In June we worked with 21 wonderful young women at Mulberry School for Girls in Whitechapel to train them in mediation skills so that they could act as peer mediators. As Hanna Bibi, our Trainer and Outreach Worker says, "It was a packed schedule but the girls threw themselves into the training. They learnt listening skills and built on their natural empathy, practising their skills and learning about conflict and the mediation process. It was wonderful to see them develop as mediators and see their ideas and experience grow over the week. I can't wait to go back and work with them at the start of the new school year to refresh their skills." In turn, one of the young women explained, "This course has been a fantastic opportunity." Another said, "The best thing was working with new people and being taught new things and learning new skills." We were delighted that one student told us "I enjoyed the experience - it's part of my life now!"

**If your school would be interested in peer mediation or buddy training, please contact Edward Mackay on 020 7702 8305 or edward@thms.org.uk**

## A new start

It feels like everything is on the move at THMS with a new Director, Edward Mackay and a new Community Mediation Manager, Emily Knox. As Emily explains, that's not all that's different. "This is an exciting time for us. We have a skilled pool of dedicated volunteers including those trained to mediate with large groups

closely. Also, we have an exciting programme of training events throughout the year that we can offer in workplaces, schools, housing associations, youth clubs and community groups. Recent successful cases demonstrate that mediation can transform community conflict. As Nazma, a Resident Enforcement Officer from a Tower Hamlets Housing Association says, 'It was



Community Mediation Manager, Emily Knox is bringing in new initiatives

## Mediators are the best people to get residents together

Nazma, Resident Enforcement Officer

- an increasing part of our work. We are reinstating case surgeries with housing officers so we can more quickly respond to reports of conflict or antisocial behaviour. It is extremely useful for us to get feedback from partner organisations so we can work together more

fantastic! Mediation made them understand each others' spaces. Mediators are the best people to get residents together. We always deal with individuals and we're always hearing one side or the other. We never get them together so mediation is good for this."

## Rebuilding bridges

Every day people become homeless through conflict with their family or landlord. We meet with people in Tower Hamlets who find themselves in such conflicts and talk through options, test ideas for a way forward and, where possible,

bring them together with their host so that difficult decisions can be made positively. Minaz Rahman, our caseworker, explains, "It is a privilege to work with people at such a difficult time, in such a personal way. I am constantly amazed by what people go through and hope to listen with compassion and help them find ways forward."

**Yes! I'd like to build peace in Tower Hamlets** - please complete as appropriate and return to Tower Hamlets Mediation Service, The Toby Club, Vawdrey Close, London E1 4UA

Name  Address

I would like more information about: becoming a mediator  mediation  other volunteering

I'd like to donate £50  £100  £250  £1000  Other amount

as a one-off donation\*  I want to donate by standing order: monthly  quarterly  annually

My bank  Sort code  Account number

I'd like to pay by CAF charity card

I am a UK tax payer and would like THMS to reclaim GiftAid on my donation (please tick here)

**Bank instructions** - Please pay the above amount each month/quarter/year to Tower Hamlets Mediation Service, The Cooperative Bank, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT. Account No: 50046506, Sort Code 08-92-90.

Signed

Date

**Thank you!**

\* please enclose a cheque or postal order