



WCA Cockermouth Limited

Policy on Resolving Disputes

10th January 2024

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that, as far as possible, complaints, grievances and disputes, whether involving contractors, leaseholders, employees or any other party, are resolved quickly and amicably.

In the first instance, wherever possible, WCA will take the initiative as early as possible to resolve any issues informally. This is the best way to restore and maintain good relationships more quickly and effectively than might be likely through a formal approach. It is important that the parties approach these informal resolution attempts in good faith, in a civil way and with an open mind.

If the informal approach does not resolve the issue quickly, either party may propose appointing a mediator before a purely formal approach is taken by anyone. Invariably disputing parties share the costs of mediation equally.

Mediation can help resolve conflicts early by providing a safe, confidential space for the parties to work together to find mutually agreeable solutions to the conflict. If successful, this avoids the need for a formal process which can negatively affect the well-being of both parties. Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process, and the parties are free to withdraw from it at any time. The aim of third-party mediation is to establish how the parties will interact in the future as a result of their discussions aided by the mediator.

The parties can agree on who to choose as their mediator and on how the mediator's costs will be paid. There are several independent providers of mediation services including:

Cumbria Mediation Solutions (www.mediationcumbria.com);

The Association of Northern Mediators www.northernmediators.co.uk); and

The Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (www.cedr.com).

For issues involving leaseholder matters, and if mediation does not resolve the issue, WCA Cockermouth Limited subscribes to The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code (<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Complaint-Handling-Code-Published-March-2022-1-1.pdf>)

The Board of WCA Cockermouth Limited should be approached in the first instance on any matters to which this Policy relates and this Policy will be applied.