



CMC Strategy: 2025 to 2028

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Who We Are

1. Introduction and History

- 1.1 The CMC is a registered charity, established in 2003. Its mission is to promote and encourage the use of mediation in the resolution of conflicts and disputes. Now, more than ever, mediation skills are urgently needed in our civil justice system, our workplaces, schools, communities and society. Excellent mediators help those in conflict to arrive at better outcomes for everyone, to the benefit of society as a whole. The CMC's vision is to build upon its work as the leading organisation in England and Wales promoting mediation (outside the family jurisdiction), regulating the training of mediators, setting and enforcing standards for mediators and working with stakeholders (in the public and private sectors) to embed and expand the role of mediation within the civil justice system and society as a whole.
- 1.2 The CMC is the largest registering and self-regulatory membership organisation for practising non-family mediators in England and Wales. It has more than 1000 members, including over 900 registered individual members, 32 registered service providers and 22 registered mediation training providers. All these members must abide by the CMC's rules as to standards, complaints and professional discipline, and for training providers, as to training moderation.
- 1.3 The largest mediation providers, trainers and mediation organisations are members of the CMC, including the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution ('CEDR'), the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators ('Ciarb'), Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors ('RICS'), Independent Mediators, IPOS, Global Mediation, Mediator Academy and the TCM Group, among others. The CMC has several regional members.

- 1.4 The first Chair of the CMC was Sir Brian Neill. Subsequent chairs have been Lord Slynn of Hadley, Sir Henry Brooke, Sir Alan Ward, Sir David Foskett, Rebecca Clark and Kelly Stricklin-Coutinho.
- 1.5 The CMC holds a special place in the mediation community because it encompasses mediators working in the civil and commercial sector as well as the workplace sector, the community sector and the SEND sector. The CMC also supports those who deliver peer mediation training schemes in schools, which teaches the next generation what mediation is and how it works. It is also the only mediation organisation that has an Academic Forum to support research, teaching and learning about mediation at undergraduate and post graduate level within Higher Education Institutions.
- 1.6 The CMC acts as a second tier for complaints about a mediator or mediation provider, if that complaint has not been resolved by the mediator or provider. The CMC has a separate Independent Complaints Committee employed to oversee this function. The CMC has also established its own standards in relation to civil and commercial mediation, as well as in relation to Community mediation. The setting, upholding and enhancement of standards in mediation has been a key part of the CMC's work, and continues to be so for this strategy period. With the greater role that mediation is taking in the Civil Justice System, and with the increased use of mediation in our communities, schools and workplaces, it is more important now than ever before that users of mediation can have confidence in the profession.
- 1.7 Every individual CMC member who practises civil/commercial or workplace mediation in England and Wales is subject to the CMC's standards and regulations. Mediators registered with the CMC must have undertaken an approved training course and follow a professional code of conduct which includes a commitment to continued professional development and submission to the CMC's independent disciplinary process. In addition, any mediator registered with the CMC must have a complaints process in place and be insured against any legal claims.

2. Our Charitable Objectives

2.1 Our Charitable Objects are currently defined as follows:

“The objects of the Charity are to be a neutral and independent body set up for the benefit of the public to:

Promote the resolution of conflicts and disputes by encouraging the use of mediation and other dispute resolution techniques and methods as alternatives to legal action or arbitration. The Charity believes that mediation delivers better quality outcomes than these. Mediation avoids the risk of unwelcome publicity because it is confidential and aims to provide win/win solutions to problems. It is likely to save time, stress, and avoid the destruction of salvageable relationships.

Advance the education of the public in matters of mediation and other dispute resolution techniques and methods.”

2.2 In line with its charitable objectives, the CMC has worked hard over the last five years to bring a somewhat fractured group of mediation organisations, providers and specialisms together in one place to simplify the market structure for its end-users – the public.

2.3 The benefits to the public of mediation of all types, and the importance of the CMC’s charitable purpose, cannot be overstated.

2.4 In its 10th Mediation Audit published in 2023, CEDR estimated the value of commercial cases mediated each year to be £20bn, with mediation contributing savings of £50bn since 1990.

2.5 Similarly, in the workplace, the resolution of disputes through the use of specialised mediators rather than a judicial process continues to be strongly encouraged. According to a 2021 Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (‘ACAS’) report, workplace conflict costs UK business £2.5 billion per year. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in the use of workplace mediation to resolve employment disputes

before they reach the stage of Employment Tribunals or referral to ACAS. This, in turn, has led to a substantial increase in the number of mediators practicing as workplace mediators. Currently, around one-third of CMC members are working in this area.

2.6 The CMC has been instrumental in providing a platform to the community mediation sector, which supports the social fabric outside of the justice system. Public health, community safety and policing, housing and education all benefit from the preventative work carried out by community mediation organisations. Suicide, homelessness, anti-social behaviour and more serious crime are just some of the areas where community conflict can devastate individual lives and require investment by national and local government to repair and respond to the damage caused by conflict.

2.7 At present the CMC's activities fall in the following areas:

- Promotion of mediation in the UK
- Engaging with external stakeholders, including counterparts in other jurisdictions, to promote mediation
- Liaising with government and influencing policy in relation to mediation
- Supporting the development of mediation across all areas of mediation except for family mediation
- Educating our members
- Setting and upholding standards, and self-regulating our members with appropriate complaints and disciplinary procedures, ensuring public confidence in CMC mediators
- Setting standards for training and moderating training courses
- Member Benefits

3. Recent Achievements

3.1 In civil and commercial mediation, the CMC has been involved with each of the major recent developments.

- a. One of the CMC's planned strategic activities in the last strategy period was supporting the potential for Automatic Referral to Mediation. Automatic Referral to Mediation for money claims valued up to £10,000 has now started by way of a pilot scheme. A compulsory one-hour mediation appointment is provided by HMCTS, which is free to the parties. The parties must take part before the claim proceeds to court if the case does not settle. Further developments in automatic referral to mediation have not been ruled out by the Ministry of Justice. Working with government in support of any further developments on automatic referral to mediation or other civil justice mediation arrangements is part of our strategy for the next period. In particular, we consider that further opportunities for referral to mediation are a positive step. We consider that those opportunities should be developed in a way that is appropriate for and proportionate to the types of cases which are to be referred, including their complexity and value, and how those might best be served by a mediation process.
- b. In addition to its planned strategic activities in the last period, the CMC also became involved with the landmark *Churchill v Merthyr Tydfil CBC* case in 2023, obtaining permission from the Court of Appeal to intervene in the case, jointly with CEDR and Ciarb. The effect of this judgment is to overturn the previous Court of Appeal authority in *Halsey* which suggested that Courts could not lawfully order mediation. Following this judgment, Courts can now order unwilling parties to mediate provided the test set out in *Churchill* is met. This judgment¹ makes a fundamental difference to the use of mediation in England and Wales.

¹ The judgment and a press summary may be found here: <https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/james-churchill-v-merthyr-tydfil-county-borough-council/>. The judgment is written in a way that is accessible to lay people.

- c. Very shortly after the judgment in Churchill, the Civil Procedure Rules Committee consulted on changes to the CPR which were intended to give effect to the judgment. The changes came into force from 1 October 2024 by way of the Civil Procedure (Amendment No.3) Rules SI 2024 No.839, and further changes were made in 2025. The changes include amending the Overriding Objective to include reference to promoting, ordering or encouraging parties to use ADR, and a costs sanction for failing to comply with an ADR order or unreasonably failing to engage with ADR.
- 3.2 The CMC has established working groups in its key areas of activity, each of which pursues activities in support of the CMC's mission to promote mediation.
- 3.3 The Community Working Group (a group of 74 members representing 24 community mediation organisations) has considered a number of topics, including public awareness, social prescribing, community cohesion, the role of community, conflict and mental health, and reviewed mental health resources produced by member Marie Coombes. Those resources have subsequently been adopted for member use.
- 3.4 The Peer Working Group has produced a workbook to aid with uniformity of peer training and for children to demonstrate the key concepts they have learned, leading to a certificate on successful completion. They have also considered how to support homeschooled children with peer mediation. The CMC is currently supporting 61 individuals who provide this training (or who are seeking to provide this training) in schools.
- 3.5 The Academic Forum has 61 members representing 29 Academic institutions. To date the CMC has provided support to the Higher Education sector in relation to the set-up of mediation clinics, employability for students, mediation within the curriculum, research initiatives (to include the role of mediation in healthcare), the role of higher education to raise local community awareness of mediation and the resolution of conflict on campus.

- 3.6 The Workplace Working Group meets quarterly and supports the promotion of early dispute resolution. They have been engaged with the Ministry of Justice and ACAS, whilst also working on initiatives including; online surgeries for local authorities to promote and discuss mediation, ACAS companions and the Dispute Resolution Roundtable with key stakeholders including ACAS, TUC, FSB and CIPD. Recent activities include a workshop for Local Authorities to explore the benefits of mediation to support their responsibilities and budgets.
- 3.7 The SEND Review Panel designs and consults on SEND Mediation Standards. These standards are sent to the CMC and to the College of Mediators (which each provide co-chairs) for approval. One such recent example is the approval by both the CMC and the College of Mediators of the SEND Legislative Framework Test. The SEND Review Panel also consults with the Department of Education.
- 3.8 The Commercial Working Group also meets quarterly, and has delivered a training session to the Institute of Directors on the use of mediation, produced a paper of ideas for developing member engagement, and produces a breakout session at the annual conference on commercial mediation matters. CWG also proposed and implemented the Mediator Launchpad scheme for supporting new mediators as they develop their practices.

4. Current Structure

- 4.1 The current structure of the CMC is as follows.
- 4.2 The Board of the CMC consists of Chair Kelly Stricklin-Coutinho, Deputy Chair Nicolas Fournier, Finance Director Terry Renouf, Amrik Kandola, Andy Rogers, Charlotte Steinfeld, Dominic Collis, Adam Gersch for Global Mediation, Henrietta Jackson-Stops, Maria Sigacheva, Niru Uddin and Roger Levitt. The Board draws on experience in the mediation and legal sectors, and those with regulatory and accounting expertise.
- 4.3 Working groups have been set up in each of the key areas in which the CMC is currently active. The working groups plan and undertake activities on behalf of the CMC, and report on those to the CMC Board.
- 4.4 Current working groups include those for Commercial, Community, Peer, Workplace, SEND and the Academic Forum. Further working groups and ad hoc projects are anticipated to be required during the period of this strategy.

5. Current Activities

5.1 The CMC's current activities are as follows:

Standards and Professionalism:

5.2 Across all areas, the CMC will develop and enhance its current standards, ensure an appropriate and robust disciplinary system, and develop best practice guidance to support its members' work.

Civil and Commercial Mediation:

International Commercial Mediation

5.3 The CMC will establish, with key partners in arbitration and litigation, a London Dispute Resolution Committee, for the promotion of the UK as a global dispute resolution jurisdiction.

Business Mediation

5.4 The CMC recognises that this is an area where mediators can bring significant value, and leading mediators are active in this work. The CMC is working on outreach to appropriate partners to educate on the value of mediation in that context and to promote its use.

Government Liaison:

Civil Justice System

5.5 The CMC supports mediation being further embedded in the Civil Justice System and is advocating for those further changes, with processes appropriate for the type of dispute. The CMC will continue to engage with government, by working with the Ministry of Justice, the Civil Justice Council, the Department for Education and other bodies as appropriate, and will continue to respond to government consultations. The CMC will continue to promote the interests of quality mediation and standards to government and other stakeholders, including advocating for commitments to using mediation.

- 5.6 In addition, the CMC is producing a Civil Mediation Guide to act as a resource for court users, for users of mediation and for mediators to refer parties to. The Guide will include reference to other resources that users of dispute resolution may find helpful, including other methods of dispute resolution. The CMC will work with government to ensure the resource can work with other resources they may be developing from time to time.
- 5.7 Once this resource is produced, it is hoped that with funding it could be developed into an electronic portal that users can use to find the most appropriate method of dispute resolution for their dispute and other support.
- 5.8 The CMC welcomes the UK having signed the Singapore Convention and will lobby the government for the ratification and implementation of the Convention in the UK.

Community Mediation:

Digital Mapping

- 5.9 The CMC is developing a Digital Mapping project where community mediation resources can be mapped across the country, to assist users of community mediation to access services.

Research demonstrating the value of Community Mediation

- 5.10 The CMC aims to support members to demonstrate the economic value of community mediation by encouraging and supporting research into this area.

Workplace Mediation:

- 5.11 The CMC is already active in liaising with government and supporting the increased use of workplace mediation. It will continue its current work and support activity to reduce the current backlogs in tribunals.
- 5.12 The CMC is also working to develop best practice and other resources which will be helpful across all sectors, for example on privilege for non-lawyers.

Peer Mediation:

5.13 Building on the work to develop resources for peer mediation in schools and to develop the network of peer mediators, the CMC is advocating for embedding conflict resolution skills more broadly, and ultimately for those skills to have a place in the national curriculum. The Peer Mediation WG is currently working on a national evaluation of Peer Mediation Outcomes in England and Wales.

Academic:

5.14 The CMC is advocating for conflict resolution skills to be better embedded in relevant academic courses, including legal courses such as the LLB and LLM. Centres of excellence already exist, and the CMC supports further programs being developed.

5.15 The CMC is working towards establishing an annual academic mediation lecture, rotating between universities with an interest in conflict resolution.

Membership:

5.16 The CMC has identified membership as an area in which a number of specific matters should be the focus of work in the next period:

- Review of Membership Categories with a view to:
 - Improving current criteria and enhancing standards,
 - identifying ways in which experienced mediators can join the CMC at the appropriate category level,
 - establishing equivalence with international counterparts in order to facilitate reciprocal membership.
- Enhancing membership benefits to include the following programs recently launched:
 - Mediator Launchpad and related projects for the sharing of experience amongst groups of new mediators and those with some experience.
 - Mediation in Session: regular events on professional development to support the development of mediators.

- The development of standards and categories of membership in relation to mediation advocacy, and a category in relation to government, businesses and law firms gaining recognition for good conflict resolution practice.
- Producing best practice guides to support members' practice.
- Developing events and connections across a broader geographical area.
- Providing a forum for the CMC's most experienced mediators to interact with one another and share expertise, and opportunities for them to share the benefit of their expertise with the membership and with external stakeholders.

5.17 The CMC is reviewing what actions it can take to support new mediators to build their practices, including obtaining observation opportunities and mentoring.

Communications:

5.18 The CMC is working on a number of communications related projects including:

- Revamp of the website
- Additional external communications to non-members and stakeholders
- More frequent use of surveys
- Media Outreach
- Producing a welcome pack for new members, signposting membership benefits

Additional Areas of Focus:

International Working Group

5.19 The CMC has identified a need for an international working group in order to share experience and best practices with our counterparts across the globe.

ED&I

5.20 The CMC will establish a working group for the task of producing CMC ED&I Guidelines to advance inclusivity in mediation.

5.21 The CMC will also consider what initiatives it would be appropriate to facilitate, taking into account successful initiatives in other areas of dispute resolution (such as the Women in Arbitration lunch program).

External Relationships

5.22 The CMC is reviewing its current relationships with counterparts and related professional bodies with a view to broadening its network.

6. Our Strategic Aims

6.1 We recognise that we are already, and will be during the next three-year period, in a time of technological advancement, which represents an opportunity for dispute resolution to be made more efficient and more user friendly. We will work with those developments, including in relation to good practice and standards for appropriate use of technology in mediation, and influencing policy development to support the use of technology in mediation, to better assist mediators and mediation users. We believe that mediating is fundamentally a skill of human interaction, but we believe that the roles of mediators and parties in a mediation can benefit from the efficiencies and additional support technology can bring.

6.2 Technological advancement and mediator mobility also each bring additional opportunities in the market for mediation, which we intend to keep at the forefront of our work when it comes to relationships with counterparts.

6.3 Our aims are that at the end of the strategy period:

6.3.1 CMC membership is seen by our members and stakeholders as a mark of quality.

6.3.2 The CMC is at the forefront of promoting mediation's use and value in England & Wales, and in promoting the UK as a centre for dispute resolution.

6.3.3 The CMC will have broadened and deepened its relationships, in particular in aid of deeper collaboration with others in our sector, in the wider dispute resolution world and with stakeholders.

7. SMART 2028 Strategic Objectives

SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Timely

7.1.1 Chartered Status – By December 2028, CMC will achieve full chartered status from the Privy Council, including its ability to award Chartered Membership to suitably qualified mediators.

7.1.2 Name & brand change – As previously agreed by the Board, by December 2028, the organisation will rebrand to become the Chartered Mediation Council (CMC). If the Chartered application fails, then the rebranded name will be to the 'Mediation Council'.

7.1.3 Integrated Mediation – The organisation will work with Government to ensure that by December 2028, mediation is integrated into the court system for higher value claims (over £10k) and that CMC Regulated Mediators are the preferred service delivery suppliers.

7.1.4 Financial Sustainability and Membership Growth - As part of our commitment to promoting mediation and broadening its positive impact across society, we are focused on expanding our reach and deepening engagement with our members and wider audiences. Over the next three years, we aim to:

- Grow and diversify our membership community, ensuring it reflects the broad range of professionals and organisations working to resolve conflict effectively across all sectors.
- Enhance the value of membership, providing increased opportunities for learning, collaboration, and sharing of best practices.
- Strengthen our long-term sustainability, ensuring we have the resources necessary to support our members and champion the wider adoption of mediation at all levels of society.

By focusing on these objectives, we will continue to position mediation as a vital tool for resolving conflict, improving relationships, and reducing the social and economic costs of unresolved disputes.

7.1.5 Engagement – By December 2028, the organisation will grow the reach and engagement of its online communications channels (website & social media) by 50%.

7.1.6 Development Impact – By December 2028, the organisation will deliver 50% growth in the professional development opportunities, provided for/consumed by its members.