

# Andrew Sims

## Specialist Independent Mediation Services

### About Andrew

Andrew is an independent mediator who is noted for his breadth of mediation experience and his track record in achieving outcomes that stand the test of time.

He has been in full time mediation practice since 2010, working across many fields including family, civil / commercial and workplace / employment, community, peer and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) mediation.

Andrew is skilled in improving communication, creating understanding and brokering agreement between people whose personal, professional or commercial relationships are under strain, or have broken down. He specialises in mediating complex and sensitive cases.

He is a Fellow of the Civil Mediation Council and an accredited mediator (FMCA) with the Family Mediation Council.

Andrew is a Professional Practice Consultant and a member of the Professional Standards Committee of the College of Mediators.

He practices mainly in London and the south-east.



## 2010—present

### Independent mediator, consultant, trainer

- Self-employed consultant providing specialist independent mediation services including: facilitated dialogue, conflict prevention, management and resolution; supervision, training and consultancy across several mediation fields including family, inter-generational, workplace, community, civil and commercial, and SEND.
- Andrew specializes in mediating high conflict disputes and complex, multi-party disputes.

## 2016—present

- **Sims Mediation**, Principal, London
- **Prime Resolution**, a renowned SEND mediation service provider (2020—present)
- **Wells Family Mediation**, a child-focussed, family mediation practice, Kent
- **South East London Family Mediation Bureau (SELFMB)**, Service Manager (2016—2019)
- **LBA Excellence**, Trainer on Mediation Foundation & Family Specialism courses, both in-person and online

## 2010—2016

- **Herts Young Homeless (HYH)**, Mediation Development Consultant (2015—2016)
- **Mediating Futures**, Co-founder, privately-funded family mediation, London
- **Wandsworth Mediation Service**, volunteer family & inter-generational mediator, co-mediating with trainee mediators

## Voluntary Roles

- Member of the Professional Standards Committee, College of Mediators, (2015—present)
- Trustee & volunteer, Southwark Mediation Centre, (2011—2019)

## Other

- Invited to speak to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Alternative Dispute Resolution (APPGADR) about the value of Peer Mediation (2014)
- Appointed Independent Mediator to the (DCLG) Planning Mediation Services Panel (2012)
- Coach with TalkingWorks, (a charity which teaches mediation skills to school children)
- Assessor to the Peer Mediation programme at Bacons College, London

## Recent Publications

- Paper entitled '*What can different fields of mediation learn from one another and how might this inform current practice*' in 'Mediation Theory and Practice' journal, published by Equinox (2021).
- Chapter entitled '*Exploring the scope of family mediation in England & Wales*' in 'Family Mediation: Contemporary Issues', published by Bloomsbury Professional (2020).

## Interests

- Andrew enjoys family life, squash, theatre, 5-a-side football, sailing and reading.

## Fundraising

- Cycled from London to Paris (Royal British Legion); rowed from Richmond to Greenwich, in the Great River Race, (The AHOY Centre); walked the Great Glen Way in Scotland, in 48 hours, (Herts Young Homeless).

## **Background 1987–2009**

Coming from a business background, Andrew understands commercial negotiation and the value of collaborative problem solving. He has worked extensively for clients in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

His professional background is in construction and property where he has held senior positions in project management, commercial management and client relationship management, working as a main contractor, supplier and consultant. Andrew's 23 years' industry experience has taught him how to handle all kinds of conflict, from resolving site-based disputes to negotiating international outsourcing and joint venture agreements.

A common thread running through Andrew's career is that of 'collaborative practice' – whether through the introduction of a 'partnering' ethos (essentially a dispute prevention process) to a civil engineering business; using internet-based technology to encourage greater co-operation on large and complex building projects; or the use of construction systems to promote greater teamwork – all have involved getting people to work together more effectively.

From 1987–1999, Andrew worked at the front line on construction sites and later, at board level, with a regional building and civil engineering contractor. Following a spell as a freelance consultant in 2000, Andrew was recruited by the Israeli start-up company, iScraper, as Director of Client Services. The company pioneered the use of web-based technology to manage high value construction projects.

As Commercial Director with Outinord SA (2002–2009), a French construction systems supplier whose clients are primarily Developers & House Builders, Andrew was responsible for managing the international office in London, with responsibility for the UK, India & China. In 2009 Andrew was approached to join the Collaboration Services business unit of Gleeds, (an international management and construction consultancy), before deciding to practice full-time as an independent mediator in 2010.

Andrew holds a degree in Social Psychology and a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA).

**Why choose  
Andrew as your  
Mediator?**

**Mediation Experience**

Andrew is a mediation specialist. He regularly practices in the fields of family, commercial, workplace / employment and community mediation.

**Business background**

He understands the everyday pressures of running a business. He knows, at first hand, how destructive disputes can be and recognizes the value in sorting them out as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**People skills**

Andrew's extensive international travel has allowed him to relate well to and work comfortably with people from all walks of life. He excels in dealing with the human side of conflict and is experienced in managing emotionally charged negotiations.

**Personal style**

Andrew is known as a constructive and pragmatic mediator. His style can best be described as engaging and approachable, yet tenacious. He is authoritative, but not authoritarian. Andrew is highly skilled in creating the right atmosphere for openness and creative thinking during discussions.

**Approach**

Andrew ensures each case is sensitively designed around the needs of each party in dispute, no matter what the context.

He will ensure thorough preparation before the mediation session, including preliminary face-to-face meetings with all participants, on an individual basis. He will also set aside time after the mediation, (should the need arise) for further meetings.

Andrew will support all participants in making informed decisions about the best way forward, for all concerned. He will help them to understand which choices they have; offer relevant knowledge and information (where appropriate); and when options are being considered, will draw on his own accumulated experience.

Andrew will make sure that all solutions are workable and that all agreements are comprehensive. He speaks and writes in plain English

**What sets Andrew apart?**

Andrew is skilled in commercial negotiation and problem solving and equally adept at dealing with fractured relationships and broken communications.

He not only draws on his knowledge of the latest research in the conflict resolution field, but also brings to bear his broad understanding of the dynamics of conflict and his invaluable experience in other fields of mediation.

**Mediation Training**

- 2010 - Civil & commercial mediation, with Dr Mike Talbot through UK Mediation, (nationally accredited by the Law Society & The Bar Council and a member of the Civil Mediation Council)
- 2010 - Community mediation – with Dave Walker (MBE) & Anne Jones, through Southwark Mediation Centre.
- 2011 - Workplace mediation - UK Mediation, (nationally accredited by the Law Society & The Bar Council and is a member of the Civil Mediation Council)
- 2012 - Family mediation with Tony Whatling, Lorraine Bramwell and Lesley Allport through Key Mediation Training & Consultancy, (recognized by the Family Mediation Council (FMC) and the European Family Mediation Forum)
- 2019 - Professional practice consultant (PPC), with Jackie Norton, through National Family Mediation (NFM)
- 2020 - Restorative Justice – with Janet Clark, through Calm Mediation
- Special Educational Needs and Disability mediation – with Hugo Besterman and Marilyn Webster, through Prime Resolution Limited (accredited by the College of Mediators and the Civil Mediation Council).

**Membership of Professional Bodies and Organisations**

- An accredited mediator (FMCA) with the Family Mediation Council
- A registered mediator and Fellow of the Civil Mediation Council (CMC)
- An approved mediator with the College of Mediators

# Testimonials

Please note, these testimonials have been anonymised, but these are the actual words used.

## Family Cases

‘Can I just say thank you for your help with us to date...our communication of late has been much more constructive and we are both able to look forward in seeking to create the best solution for the kids. With much appreciation and warmest regards.’ *Party, child contact case*

‘We are both equally happy with that arrangement which we arrived at, thanks to the help we received from you. We’re also confident that we can support each other parents which is, of course, the most important thing. So thank you again for helping us to clarify our situation and pointing us in the right direction.’ *Parties, divorce, finance and property case*

‘I was very impressed by the session and the safe boundaries that came out of it. Please could you tell Andrew that I feel lighter and hopeful which is a big step and the holding of space allowed this to happen. *Message to Mediation Practice Manager from a client, inter-generational dispute*

‘I have been meaning to write to you for a while as I’m still so grateful for your work with us over the last year. We are as a family in a much better place and I am too. The fact that we managed to separate amicably with your help has meant we’ve all made a positive start with the next stage of our lives. B has moved locally for the interim which means the children now spend 50% of their time with him and have their father back. He’s enjoying it and they are enjoying it and that’s been the main things that I’d hoped to achieve. As a consequence I am so much happier. I know the kids are fine and now have time to myself to re-build my own life.’ *Party, all issues case.*

## Workplace and Employment Mediation, Professional Complaints

Thanks for all your help...we are talking a lot more and generally getting on much better. *Party, workplace dispute*

‘I just wanted to reiterate to you how grateful I am for the professional but caring approach you have had to this difficult process. I am very grateful to have had you recommended to me and that you made a painful, difficult situation

manageable. I will certainly be recommending you to others if I have the opportunity.’ *Party, employment dispute*

‘As dentists, we deal with anxious patients in an emotionally charged environment. One in seven dentists have had a complaint made about them to the GDC...When I have a difficult situation to deal with, I contact Andrew Sims. He knows how to prevent escalation of the problem. He can explain what needs to be done, clearly and simply.’  
*Party, professional complaint*

### **Civil and Commercial Cases**

I was impressed with your approach and style.’  
*Party, commercial dispute*

‘Thank you for the work which you have done with X and Y. My client is very pleased with the mediation and I have had very good feedback about you.’ *Solicitor, commercial dispute*

‘A very warm thank you. This has been a very difficult experience for both of us and your advice and sensitive comments...were of enormous help to me personally at this time.’ *Parties, commercial dispute*

‘I would like to thank you for the time you have spent in achieving in 4 hours, what we never achieved in 4 months. I think it is by far a much better process than solicitors and court’. *Party, commercial dispute*

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**

‘I just wanted to say thank you for your support through this process. We are very pleased with the outcome of the mediation meeting’. *Parent, SEND mediation*

### **Hybrid Cases**

‘We seem to have achieved so much more than I expected for the single day’. *Client, family / commercial case*

‘We thought that you handled the case superbly from start to finish. The result speaks for itself. We are most grateful’  
*Client, inheritance-related case*

‘Thanks again for your great work’. *Client, case involving communication breakdown between family members*