

Settling disputes

The new Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals start today and provide a last resort for warring neighbours.

Typical causes of disputes



Noise,
vibration



Smell,
smoke



Littering,
obstruction



Pet
problems



Neighbours with difficult disputes that cannot be settled even after mediation can turn to these new tribunals for help.



The tribunal judge may order the parties to apologise and make peace, pay damages of up to \$20,000, impose penalties (like fines and jail) or order them to attend mediation sessions.



If a party breaches the order, the judge may make a special direction requiring the party to comply.



If a party breaches the special direction, the judge may impose a fine of up to \$5,000 and/or a jail term. The judge may also order the offender to move out of his house.