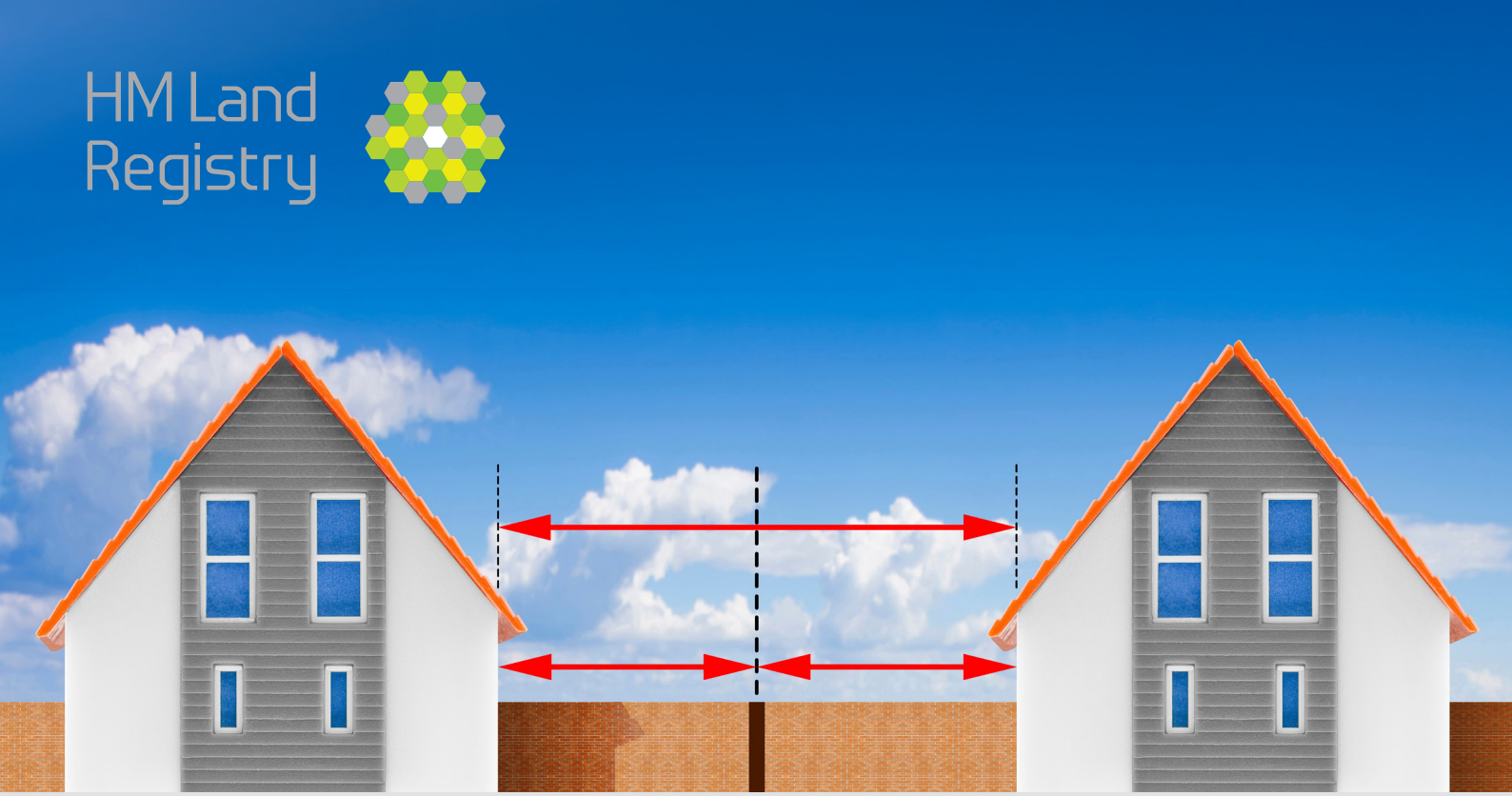
HM Land Registry



Boundaries between neighbours

A quick guide to common myths, facts and where to get help

This leaflet explains how to approach a boundary issue and helps you understand some of the most common myths and facts about them.

If you are unsure where your boundary is, or you think there may be a disagreement, start by checking the title register, title plan and any deeds. These can help indicate where your boundaries may be.

There's a common misunderstanding that you are responsible for the boundary on the left of your property. People often advise you check your property title deeds and plans; while these are helpful they only show a general boundary rather than a precise, legal boundary.

Check your property's title register, plan and deeds carefully to see what they tell you.

If you can, talk to your neighbour, or the person you disagree with, as early as possible. A respectful conversation may help you agree a way forward.

Write down anything you agree with your neighbour, so you both have a clear record and can avoid any confusion later.

If you're unable to reach an agreement, you should not move, replace or remove a fence, wall, hedge or other boundary feature without first obtaining legal advice.

What HM Land Registry can and cannot do

We can:

- explain title plans, general boundaries and boundary agreements
- provide copies of title registers, title plans and filed deeds where available
- record a boundary agreement in the title register
- register a determined boundary

We cannot:

- resolve boundary disputes or give legal advice
- decide where the exact legal boundary is
- recommend any particular course of action

If there is a dispute or to avoid one

- Talk to your neighbour as soon as possible, if safe and practical.
- Check your register, title plan and deeds to see if they include anything about who owns or is responsible for the boundaries.
- Seek legal advice before moving or replacing a fence, wall or hedge or other boundary feature.
- Put in writing any agreement you make with your neighbour.
- Get legal advice if you're thinking about making a boundary agreement.

Check out the information below to separate boundary fact from fiction and see what HM Land Registry can do to help.

Myths and facts

Myth	Fact
"I own the boundary on the left." There is no general left or right-hand rule.	**It depends on the evidence.** Deeds, agreements and long-term use may all matter.
"Fence posts prove ownership." This is a common myth.	**Fence posts or rails do not prove who owns a boundary.** A legal boundary may follow one of these features, but it cannot be assumed that it does.
"A 'T' mark* on a title plan always proves who owns a boundary." Not always – a plan must be read with the deed.	**A 'T' mark on the title plan may show who is responsible for maintaining a fence, wall or hedge, but it does not always prove ownership.** You need to read the plan together with the deed to understand what it means. For example, the deed may say you must 'maintain the boundaries marked with an inward-facing T mark', but that does not prove you own it. It is also possible that a boundary feature has been replaced and different responsibilities agreed. In practice, T marks do **not** usually appear on HM Land Registry title plans.
"The red edging on a title plan, which usually follows a feature like a fence, hedge or wall, shows the exact position of the legal boundary." It may not show the exact legal line.	**In almost all cases title plans only show general boundaries.** The red edging around the property is to identify the land that is registered; it does not show the precise legal boundary.
"HM Land Registry will settle a boundary dispute." We cannot decide who is right.	**HM Land Registry cannot decide who is right in a dispute.** We can provide copies of documents on request and refer you to guidance, but we cannot settle the dispute for you. If you cannot agree, you may need mediation, or a tribunal or court may ultimately need to decide the matter.
"If you're responsible for maintenance of a feature, then you must own it." Not necessarily.	**Being responsible for maintenance does not automatically mean you own the feature.** It is worth checking the deeds and getting professional advice, for example from a solicitor. If you and your neighbour agree who is responsible for maintenance, you can record this in a boundary agreement, which HM Land Registry can then register.
"Your land always goes out to the middle of the road." This is not automatic.	**Ownership of land adjoining a road does not automatically mean that you own any part of the road.** If the ownership of the road matters to you, it is worth getting professional advice, as claims about roads can be complicated.

* for more information about 'T' marks, and a range of other boundary related issues, see our gov.uk page about boundaries and boundary disputes Boundaries and boundary disputes on GOV.UK

Remember: HM Land Registry can explain registered information and record certain agreements or decisions. But we cannot decide in a dispute, give legal advice or define a disputed boundary.

Advice and support

The RICS Consumer Guide: Boundary Disputes contains guidance and links to a mediation service. They can also help you find a surveyor.

Law Society: can help you find a solicitor.

Citizens Advice: has guidance on what to do if you are having problems with a neighbour.

Civil Mediation Council: may be able to help mediate between neighbours or others involved in a dispute.

GOV.UK: offers property boundary guidance and practice guides.