The English civil justice system is undergoing substantial procedural reforms. A major aspect of those reforms is the enhanced focus on the use of alternative dispute resolution procedures (ADR), in particular mediation. The issue of compulsory ADR, however, remains a controversial one. This paper critically considers the issue of compulsory ADR in light of recent civil justice reforms and decided cases. It argues that although the current reform efforts in enhancing ADR are to be welcomed, future reform efforts will be undermined given the unsatisfactory state of the jurisprudence. It is argued that the courts should grasp the nettle and formally reject the orthodox approach to compulsory ADR and fully embrace their case management powers in making ADR orders in appropriate cases. Ultimately, this will allow the senior judiciary to develop a more principled approach to compulsory ADR which will, in turn, send a clearer message to litigants and the profession on the extent of their ADR obligations.