

Leading Greater Essex



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What is Leading Greater Essex?

Leading Greater Essex (LGE) is a unique opportunity for public service leaders from across Essex to work together to develop their capabilities and confidence as system leaders and use their learning to influence change in their own organisation and across the wider Essex system to benefit communities across Greater Essex.

The events of 2020 have highlighted the adaptability of our people, organisations and systems in response to an unprecedented crisis. Both the pandemic and the social and economic challenges that have been deepened by its impacts demand that together we acknowledge that these complex problems do not belong to one organisation or one sector. They require leadership that crosses traditional boundaries and silos that reflects behaviours of collaboration, shared purpose and enquiry. As we reshape public services more dramatically than we have for a generation, systems leadership will be vital.

The aim of each year of LGE is to take a cohort of leaders from across Essex, Southend and Thurrock and expose them to new mindsets and methods for leading in complexity and across systems. This includes testing out learning concurrently through “real work” placements within partner organisations, and opportunities for the wider system to be able to learn with and from their experience and understanding of systems change. LGE is a mixture of learning to think differently and learning to do differently in order better to serve communities across Essex while building stronger networks with each other and with senior leaders and sponsors of the programme.

The core approach is development through delivering change. The programme is part of the systems change, not about systems change. The content supports participants to deliver change in real time. Learning providers facilitate action by:

- Founding masterclasses and webinars on the principle of applied learning, using key tools such as systems mapping, driver diagrams, network mapping etc.
- Putting real system challenges at the heart of the programme design
- Learning and tools are there to support delivery of real work needed to deliver the Future of Essex ambitions

LGE is more than personal leadership development, because in addition to growing your learning, the opportunity is to help further shape the whole system’s understanding of change.

Who is it for?

LGE is for you if you wish to take your skills in leading change to the next level. It is for you if you want to learn how to think differently and do differently in order to lead effectively in the 21st Century, exploring this through the challenge of generating change in the Greater Essex public services system. It is definitely for you if you are open, curious, and thirsty for challenge and disruption.



We expect participants to be in senior and/or strategic positions across the whole range of public and voluntary service organisations serving Essex. You will be passionate about improving outcomes for the people that you serve, and keen to play a bigger role in working with colleagues across the County to meet head-on the complex challenges Essex faces today. Perhaps you feel blocked by the traditional mechanisms that are used to try to achieve change across complex systems. You might be frustrated by rules, priorities, practices and people that appear not to be lined up with what you feel is really important for communities across Essex, Southend and Thurrock. You are trying to do what you feel matters, but often feel stuck, or slowed down. It's frustrating. Does this sound familiar?

Is this programme for me?

- Are you the sort of self-motivated person who wants to learn, lead, contribute, act, and would like to learn to thrive in 'messy' system-wide work?
- Do you want to further develop your leadership skills, tools and approaches in challenging and supported real work situations, especially in contexts where you hold no formal or hierarchical authority?
- Are you curious? Are you interested to explore ideas, provocations and perspectives beyond your own; to test and develop your ability to see and step beyond your own mental traps?
- Are you willing – with support – to step forward and step up: to decide how to take action without someone telling you precisely what to do?
- Are you committed enough to manage the diary challenge?
- **Can you commit to attending the 12 days with the cohort, plus carving out additional days of time to deepen your learning and work together with colleagues to make a real difference?**

How has LGE been designed?

This is not a traditional training course that you might attend, playing the role of passive recipient. LGE has been designed and iterated using an evidence-based theory of learning.

This year LGE will be entirely virtual, however opportunities will vary in style and content.

The intention is professional learning that leads to sustained change in personal and organisational behavior with the following underlying principles:

- Integrated & embedded
- Active & immersive
- Open & collaborative
- Purposeful & relevant

LGE will deliberately harness new perspectives, mixed media and new methods in ways that disrupt traditional modes of thinking and doing, and which open up new conversations. Top-class facilitation will make the disruptive space feel safe.



Sessions will include whole cohort masterclasses and webinars and your place will include vouchers to enable you to invite a guest to a couple of these. Learning will be interactive, including frequent connections with different subgroups of the cohort, not just working with those undertaking the same virtual placement as you.

LGE2020 will run from November 2020 to August 2021 but once you are part of it, you'll become a member of the LGE alumni and grow the movement of whole systems thinkers across Greater Essex.

This year LGE will be delivered by a collaboration of delivery partners and will comprise 4 elements all of which will draw upon mixed methods:

- you will experience some direct teaching of frameworks and intellectual constructs to understand the systems we work in and leadership of change;
- you will be part of a working group linked to a host sponsor, supporting your virtual placement in their organisation. Here you will test out your theoretical learning by using practical tools and methods;
- you will learn together as a community as you further develop your capabilities and learning: both on and off your day job, and you will reflect together – with your cohort colleagues and with senior sponsors of the programme – on what you see happening, deepening the shared understanding about how systems work and how to lead effectively in the Essex system.

LGE2020 programme elements



Elements 1-3 of LGE2020 will be delivered by our learning partners and the fourth is the central aspect of your learning whereby you will state a preference which will help us allocate you into virtual placement groups, working in a partner organisation with a senior sponsor to progress a System Challenge identified as a key priority for public service partners across Greater Essex.

Element 1 - Understanding complex systems and challenges:

- The foundations of Systems Theory
- System mapping and understanding networks
- Understanding complex problems from multiple levels and vantage points
- Multiple perspectives and ethnographic insights
- Creating a shared narrative / vision

Element 2 – Influencing beyond a role or organisation:

- System Leadership behaviours
- Building personal impact and influence
- The power of unconscious bias
- Securing changes through generative dialogue

Element 3 - Encouraging a mindset for innovation:

- Leading agile projects
- Co-creation and collaboration
- Managing uncertainty
- Building a learning culture
- Raising awareness, confidence and willingness to do things differently

Element four - Leading together

Drawing on a strong bank of knowledge and experience of senior sponsors and previous alumni. You will be supported throughout the programme to follow the first three elements and test your learning through practical work in groups.

Multi-partner sponsor System Challenges

Element 4 described above will require you to form working groups of up to 8 participants against each of the priority system challenge areas described in the separate “LGE 2020 System Challenges” document ([LGE2020 Challenges](#)). Each challenge has a key sponsor drawn from senior leadership of public service organisations across Greater Essex.

You will be undertaking a “virtual placement” within the host organisation for this area of work, with the guidance of the senior sponsor available to you throughout the programme. Each group should self-organise around the work, drawing upon the learning provided within the other 3 elements of LGE.

As part of your application you are asked to state a first and second preference for the area of work to which you would like to anchor your LGE learning.



You will not be expected to find the time to solve everything! Once you have completed Element 1 you will begin to spend more time working with your sponsor and LGE group on your virtual placement. We will support you to explore your chosen problem through different ways of working, noticing, diagnosing and intervening, so that together you will bring a new contribution to addressing a complex and priority issue in Essex.

What should I expect?

Through participation in LGE2020 you will:

- grow consciousness of your frames and perspectives (mindset);
- build a collaborative awareness of your context and the culture and behaviours that characterise it;
- understand some basic features of the theoretical underpinning around systems thinking, complexity, and implications for leadership;
- reflect and learn, with a focus on action: become aware of your own agency in the system as leaders, as shapers of the context and leaders of change;
- develop, apply and reflect iteratively on more active forms of leadership,
- Join a community of practitioners keyed into the challenges of leadership, ready to respond;
- understand learning as a critical leadership discipline, and how to create environments in which other colleagues can learn;
- identify your own learning needs, and those of your organisations.

We will have 12 days of online contact time as a cohort during the year, and in addition we expect you to put in up to another 3-4 days to reflect on your learning and to work together with colleagues as part of your challenge placement.

Our delivery partners (PSTA and Collaborate) will make the theories of learning and change explicit in the design of our time – both together and apart – during the LGE2020 journey. This means we will set high expectations for your active participation in the learning, but you will understand why you are being asked to do what you are being asked to do, and our aim is that you will feel supported at all times.

- There will be input of theoretical context, approaches and methodologies, through to tools and technologies that are helpful in embedding practices of leading in complexity. We will be offering you a range of connected ideas and methods with which to experiment and play: some things will work more for some people than others.
- There will be some reading you will be expected to do – but not too much.

Expectations of participants:

- Your commitment to attending, and engaging with the elements of the learning within this programme opportunity, even when it's difficult to find the time, headspace etc., and even when it makes you feel far outside your comfort zone
- Committing to your relationships with your fellow participants, to work and learn together
- Reflecting on your learning, and your experience of applying that learning to your work as a leader in Essex, and being prepared to share your reflections with each other, and with the wider system
- We do not expect learning to happen in a neat, linear way. It often takes time to percolate or crystalize, and we do not expect everyone to move at the same pace or to find breakthroughs at the same moment. Honest, iterative reflection will enable you to keep track on what's happening for you.
- You will need to be prepared to move beyond where you feel comfortable, and to practice things that you don't yet feel confident doing.
- There will be an emphasis on taking action: using your learning to try new ways of mobilising change. And then to reflect on what happened, and what new insights have been revealed.
- It will be fun!

Expectations of sponsoring leaders / organisations:

- Support their organisational participants to fulfil their commitment to the programme, by checking in, and supporting the removal of perceived barriers to engaging with the work
- Draw in LGE participants to engage in dialogue about what they are learning and how we collectively might do complex change differently across Greater Essex for the benefit of citizens
- Engage in regular conversations with each other as an LGE sponsoring collective throughout the life of the programme to ensure we achieve our shared purpose.
- For some of the sponsors, host a group of LGE participants as "virtual placements" whilst they undertake one of the key challenges prioritized as part of Future of Essex work.

Reflections from past LGE participants:

"Every time I've come to an #LGE2018 session I've come away really energised, feeling I can really make a difference."

"LGE has given me a theoretical underpinning that will help me think, plan and deliver. Most importantly I think LGE has reinvigorated my commitment to listen, engage and work with citizens to enable them to drive change for themselves."



Core content across whole programme

The Public Service Transformation Academy are delivering Element 1, “Understanding complex systems and challenges”. Collaborate are delivering Elements 2 and 3 “Influencing beyond a role or organisation” and “Encouraging a mindset for innovation”.

The delivery partners suggest we maintain the flexibility to adapt the design to accommodate insights into the learning needs of the cohort that emerge as our engagement progresses.

Webinars: core learning content

Element 1: 6 x 80 minutes webinars, Elements 2 & 3: 3 per element 90-120 minutes

- 20-25 minute talk
- 15 minute break out
- Q&A

The webinars will be focused on imparting key content, including insights and ideas, followed by participants exploring in groups how they can apply leading thinking and practices to their challenge, and dialogue with the speaker and wider cohort.

Master classes: more exploratory spaces for ideas and connection

We anticipate these sessions will ‘deep dive’ into topics with expert speakers, complemented by group discussions and activities which focus on the practical challenges the participants are working through with Essex Partners and provide opportunities for participants to apply learning from the programme to their work.

Element 1: 3 x 3 hours, Element 2 & 3: 2 per element x 3-4 hours

- External speaker and Q&A
- Plus, workshop-style breakouts in project teams along with senior sponsors
- Applying learning from speaker; reinforcing and applying learning from webinars

Coaching: where ‘work’ takes place

- Structured around project teams x 10
- Action learning approach (RQ)

Element 1 content: Understanding complex systems & challenges

Master class 1.1: Foundations of systems theory, including systems mapping



Appreciating systems thinking as a frame of reference for dialogue and collaborative problem-solving, exploring the role learning plays in systems change, applying systems mapping to the context you face.

Master class 1.2: Understanding complex problems, including diversity and inclusion

Understanding technical and adaptive problems, and the approaches and tools that apply to each. Exploring the role that perspective plays, the value of diversity, and relationship to outcomes.

Master class 1.3: Creating a shared narrative

Exploring the role narrative plays in creating shared understanding and purpose and supporting relationships and co-creation.

Webinar 1.1: Understanding networks

Insights from network science for engaging and co-creating with communities.

Webinar 1.2: Ethnographic insights

Understanding the opportunities ethnographic approaches offer for generating valuable insights into citizens' perspectives.

Webinar 1.3: Outcomes thinking (PSTA Library)

Outcomes as the result of complex, adaptive systems, and the role measures play in shaping system outcomes.

Webinar 1.4: Behaviour change (PSTA Library)

Insights from behaviour change and applying leading models to design interventions.

Webinar 1.5: Essex Alumni

This webinar will be shaped and delivered based on the learning and experiences of past LGE participants.

Webinar 1.6: Essex Alumni

This webinar will be shaped and delivered based on the learning and experiences of past LGE participants.

Element 2 content: Influencing beyond role or organisation

Master class 2.1: System leadership behaviours:

Exploring a systems mindset and behaviours; what these mean for participants; the principles of adaptive leadership and applying this approach to live challenges. Leading with empathy, influencing without authority and personal resilience.

Master class 2.2: Taking action in complex systems and building personal impact and influence:

Exploring empathy and relationships in our roles, understanding the value of influencing and negotiation (including distributive and integrative negotiation); a framework for taking action.

Webinar 2.1: Exploring practices for personal reflection: embedding learning and reflection, including revealing the way we make decisions and unconscious bias.

Webinar 2.2: Enabling collaborative change: the process of change, understanding power dynamics, empathy and learning to hold multiple perspectives.

Webinar 3.3: Securing changes through generative dialogue: developing an iterative and inclusive process that brings together multiple stakeholders. Exploring appreciative inquiry, drawing on case studies.

Element 3 content: Encouraging a mindset for innovation

Master class 3.1: Leading agile projects:

Design thinking, prototyping, sprints and agile methodology.

Master class 3.2: Co-creation and collaboration:

Understanding and building conditions for collaboration.

Webinar 3.1: Managing uncertainty: developing effective collaborative approaches to addressing complex challenges, understanding and applying the Cynefin framework.

Webinar 3.2: Building a learning culture: the importance of learning as a driver of improvement (including reflective practice, Theory U and double loop learning).

Webinar 3.3: A growth mindset: culture change, innovation, risk and learning from failure.

Recruitment Process

Sponsors want the cohort to involve people who have real appetite for learning in collaboration with others, and who between them provide a good balance of participation across agencies in the Essex system. Whilst past programmes were constrained in size due to physical practicalities at venues etc. LGE2020's virtual approach means we may be able to accommodate as many as 80 participants in this cohort. there is an over-subscription, selection will be made on this basis.

As a reminder, you will be a leader or emerging leader who:

1. Is driven by a moral purpose to serve the communities of Essex
2. Is able to step back and make connections to the wider picture
3. Is able/willing to operate in ambiguity
4. Is comfortable not knowing, and who has a high appetite for learning
5. Is able/keen to influence beyond your authority
6. Demonstrates openness (in thinking, in learning, in doing)



7. Has personal qualities of patience, tenacity, resilience, reflexivity, humility.

Application

We encourage senior sponsors to raise awareness of this opportunity with colleagues and applications from participants are welcomed to share this brochure and online application form. We encourage applicants to read through the form in order to familiarize themselves with the questions prior to commencing completion as you may need to read, collate and consider your responses before submitting.

[Apply for Leading Greater Essex 2020](#)

If you have any questions, get in touch with essexpartners@essex.gov.uk

Finance

Your organisation will be charged £2k per participant for places on LGE2020. There are 5 places available to voluntary and community organisations via a bursary.

Key Dates

Thursday 8th October 2020	Applications open
Wednesday 28th October 2020	Applications close
6th November	LGE 2020 online launch

LGE2020 Delivery Partners

Each year LGE is delivered in partnership between Essex Partners and external systems leadership specialists. This year our partners are the Public Service Transformation Alliance (PSTA) and Collaborate CIC:



Paul Conneely, PSTA

Paul is a transformation expert with over 20 years' experience of working across a range of client engagements focused on using the latest research, insights, proven practices to transform outcomes for communities through innovation and collaboration. Paul designs and manages executive development programmes focused on leadership and innovation for senior managers from both public and private sectors, including designing and leading development programmes for change-makers across health, local and civil services that equip senior managers with transformational capabilities including systems thinking, service design, agile methods, managing change, co-production, behavioural insights, coaching and outcomes commissioning. Paul has delivered programmes for Greater Manchester NHS and Combined Authority, Kent County Council, East Midlands Councils, Eastern Academic Health Science



Network, as well as the National Commissioning Academy. Most recently Paul designed, launched and manages a virtual capability development programmes - comprising an online learning environment, video lectures, virtual workshops and group coaching - for 16 public service organisations.

Stephen Moss, PSTA

Stephen has over 30 years consulting experience working with clients across a range of sectors on strategic change, leadership, organisation design and performance improvement projects using systems thinking and participatory action research methods at the core of his approach. As an organisation development specialist he brings a focus on outcomes, a strong background in applied psychology and experience of working on both strategy and nitty-gritty operations. He is keenly interested in psychologically informed organisation design and development. He has led 7 Commissioning Academies for the Public Service Transformation Academy, working with County, Districts, CCG, NHS Trusts, police and VCS participation (including East of England). He worked on the development of the 5-year Health Commissioning Strategy for SE London with 6 CCGs, the 6 Local Authorities and major acute and mental health Trusts in the region. He has led leadership and change programmes in local government, central government, financial services and other sectors. He regularly delivers strategy/community-building workshops, most recently for Human Rights Forum, British Council, Blackpool Opportunity Area. Currently he is leading a Senior Leadership Team Development programme for Somerset Council. He is founder director of a social theatre CIC working with communities in creative ways (and interested in arts and mental health), is a trustee with Immediate Theatre - an outreach youth-based charity in Hackney and has been a trustee (9 years)/volunteers with A Band of Brothers, a charity working with young men coming out of prison/in the justice systems. He qualified as a social worker a long time ago and managed local authority residential homes for Young People in care and a community mental health resettlement service in Lambeth. He has 2 grandchildren.



Richard Field, PSTA

Richard's experience includes four years as Senior Fellow of the Office for Public Management, 6 years as a University Programme Director, and many years as a director of learning and development companies. Richard's key skills are his ability to coach, facilitate and teach. Richard is an Essex resident, deeply involved in local community activity, and is the author of a number of leadership books including two focused on public service commissioning for outcomes, most recently Asset- Based Commissioning.



Anna Randle – Chief Executive, Collaborate CIC

Anna Randle is an expert in systems change and the design of collaborative public services. As Chief Executive of Collaborate CIC, Anna leads Collaborate CIC's work with places across the country to build collaborative approaches to social change.

This includes working with local partnerships to develop new place-based strategies and collaborative approaches to public services, convening actors from different

sectors to build new coalitions for change, and supporting accompanying changes in practice and culture in organisations, services and places. In the past year Anna has led long-term strategic work in Cambridgeshire, Barking and Dagenham and Gateshead.

Anna is also a lead facilitator on the SOLACE/Collaborate Ignite programme, a system leadership offer for local authority Chief Executives, and she oversees Collaborate's work with a wide range of partners, including civil society and social funders as well as public services.

Prior to joining Collaborate, Anna spent 4 years as Director of Policy for the London Borough of Lambeth, where she helped lead strategy and innovation focused on shifting Lambeth's operating model towards new models of collaborative public services. She has also been a Special Advisor in two government departments, worked on the Lyons Inquiry for HM Treasury and for the New Local Government Network.

Jeff Masters, Senior Head of Practice, Collaborate CIC

Jeff Masters is a Senior Head of Practice at Collaborate, leading our collaborative leadership programme with Active Essex, place-based work in Kirklees, Essex, Barnet, and Gateshead, and systems change work with Homeless Link. He has led our work on local government reorganisation in Somerset, adult social care innovation in Devon, and the role of place-based foundations in Letchworth.



Prior to working at Collaborate he has almost two decades of experience in public policy and practice, working at the intersection of policy, politics and academia as a civil servant, in think tanks, in politics, and for academics. Jeff was policy adviser and speechwriter to Shadow Business Secretaries Chuka Umunna MP and Rt Hon John Denham MP, an official in HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office, and secretary to the Commission on 2020 Public Services based at the RSA. Jeff holds a Masters of Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School.