

Leading Greater Essex 2022

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Leading Greater Essex

Why?

Do you want to be part of the change Essex needs?

As the pandemic has shown, so many of the most difficult public challenges we face do not fit neatly within our organisational structures. From protecting the vulnerable, to meeting the health and care needs of our elderly residents, to decarbonizing our economy, these are challenges which require collaboration across organisations and sectors. They require leadership from those who can bring people together and are comfortable working across professional and organisational boundaries.

Problems like these are complex, adaptive challenges which do not have easy solutions. They need leadership from those who can challenge long-held assumptions – including their own – and are comfortable with uncertainty, ambiguity and exploration. They need people who have developed skills to think systemically, intervene thoughtfully and mobilise people to action. They need not heroes, but servants. A different kind of leadership from a different kind of leader.

What?

If you work in a senior role in the voluntary or public sector in Essex, Thurrock, and Southend Leading Greater Essex (LGE) is an opportunity for you to develop these kinds of leadership skills and become a more effective agent of change. LGE is a leadership programme with a difference. It is not just a personal development programme – although it will support your personal development, especially if you are willing to look inside. But it is also an investment by those who sponsor the programme in the capabilities of the Essex system to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

As you develop your skills, you will do this alongside others in similar roles but from different organisations and organisational cultures, learning from their insights and experience as they learn from yours. In doing so you will develop a network of colleagues across Essex who can support you – and you can support – in this difficult work. Together you will become part of the latest cohort of people across the Essex system who have been through the LGE programme and are continuing to develop and apply the skills they learned.

The programme will provide you with new analytical tools to enable you to understand complex, systemic problems and the contexts within which they are embedded. But good analysis on its own is not enough. Effective action means mobilising people and resources from across the system, unblocking the blockers which are holding Essex back. So, as well as helping you to *think* differently about complex problems, the programme is also designed to support you to put the ideas you are learning into *practice* – in safe learning environments and by applying them to real world challenges facing Greater Essex.

It aims to engage not just your *head* (what you know and think), but also your *heart* (your motivations and behaviours) and your *hands* (providing opportunities to put the ideas into practice). And because this is difficult work, the relationships you will develop through the programme will provide you with allies and confidants for who you can provide mutual support long after the programme is done.

Who?

Leading Greater Essex is for people in senior and/or strategic positions in any public or voluntary sector organisation serving Essex. To get the best from Leading Greater Essex you will need the right motivation and approach to learning, as well as being able to commit to the programme alongside your other work responsibilities.

The programme is for you if:

- You are in a senior and/or strategic role in any public or voluntary sector organisation serving Essex [and have the support of your employer to participate]
- You are passionate about making a difference for the people of Essex and want to play your part in the change Essex needs
- You are curious, including being open to ideas, provocations, and perspectives beyond your own
- You are keen to learn, willing to look inside and challenge yourself as well as contribute to the learning of others
- You can fit the programme schedule into your work schedule. This will involve attending around 23 sessions over the course of a year, as well as additional work on your system challenge.

How?

LGE is a participative programme, and you will get out what you put in. In addition to insights from guest speakers and teaching from programme leaders, you will learn by drawing on your own experiences, and on the insights of your peers. Together you will apply what you are learning from the programme to real challenges faced across Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The programme builds progressively:

- Part 1 is called **Foundations for Systems Leadership** where the content is designed to support participants to make a transition in mindset and practice from an organisational focus based on subject expertise towards a systems focus and a comfort with uncertainty, inquiry and exploration. This will include sessions on:
 - Systems and outcomes thinking
 - Your role in leading change
 - Mapping your system
- Part 2 is called **Skills for the Systems Practitioner** and seeks to develop skills valuable for systems leadership. It will include:
 - Negotiation and dispute resolution
 - Public narrative/shared narrative
 - Understanding networks
- Part 3 is called **Leading Systemic Change** and focuses on the process of leading change.
 - Participation and Collaboration
 - Seizing the moment
 - Learning

Each part of the programme will support participants to learn, internalise and practice skills for system leadership, through three distinctive types of sessions and by engaging with a live challenge for Essex:

- **Group learning sessions** will include input from guest speakers and programme leaders, as well as small group exercises and discussion with the focus on developing subject knowledge and helpful frameworks to make sense of systemic, adaptive problems.
- **Reflection and application sessions** will give participants the opportunity to test, internalise and experiment with their understanding of the programme content and to learn about system dynamics from the behaviour of the group.
- **Group coaching sessions** will follow the structure of the programme, with action learning sets initially helping participants to internalise shifts in mindset towards systems leadership, and then supporting Challenge Groups as they respond to their chosen System Challenges.
- **System Challenges** are a significant distinguishing part of the programme, offering participants the opportunity to work with their peers applying the learning from the programme to live problems facing Essex.

Overview	Group learning	Reflection and application	Group coaching	System challenges
Launch Day (in person if possible)				
Jan to Mar 1. Foundations for systems leadership	3 group learning sessions (2 hrs) • Systems & outcomes thinking • Your role in leading change • Mapping your systems	2 Reflection and application sessions (2 hrs)	• 1 ALS on role development (2 hrs)	Establishing the challenge themes and sponsors
Apr to Jun 2. Skills for the system practitioner	3 group learning sessions (2 hrs) • three from list of options	1 reflection and application session (2 hrs)	• 1 ALS in Challenge Groups (2 hrs)	Intro to Action Inquiry (3 hrs) Independent work on challenges
Jul to Nov 3. Leading systemic change	3 group learning sessions (2 hrs) • Participation and Collaboration • Seizing the moment • Learning	1 reflection and application session (2 hrs)	• 2 ALS in Challenge Groups (2 hrs)	Action inquiry feedback & 100 day planning (6 hrs, in person if possible) Independent work on challenges
Celebration Day (in person if possible)				

Multi-partner sponsor System Challenges

The practical element of the programme will involve collaborating on key system challenges in working groups of up to 10 participants. This year the system challenges will focus on an ambitious programme of work across partners, businesses and communities to Level Up Essex, supporting residents in Essex to achieve the education and skills they need, share in economic success, experience a high-quality



environment, have high levels of health and well-being and be part of stable, secure and resilient communities and families.

The challenges will have a blend of pan-Essex and place-based focus and each will have a key sponsoring partnership or board to connect the work into the wider system. The challenges will be co-produced by the cohort and sponsors once the programme has commenced; participants will have the opportunity to select the topics that are of most interest to them.

Each challenge group should self-organise around the work, drawing upon the learning provided within the other elements of LGE.

You will **not** be expected to find the time to solve everything! Once you have completed part 1 you will begin to spend more time working with your sponsor and LGE group on your challenge. 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.

The delivery of the programme will be mostly online, but we are hoping that the launch of the programme and the celebration event at the end can be in person events.

We will have 12 days FTE of online contact time as a cohort during the year and in addition we expect you to put in up to another 5 days to reflect on your learning and to work together with colleagues as part of your challenge Group.

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 LGE2022 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 of 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 sponsoring partnerships/boards, host a group of LGE participants 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 #LGE20 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.”

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. LGE2022'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 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 2022](#)

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

Finance

Your organisation will be charged £2k per participant for places on LGE2022. There are 5 places available to voluntary and community organisations via a bursary.

Key Dates

- November 2021** - Applications open
- 3rd December 2021** - Applications close
- December 2021** - Onboarding and pre-reading
- 19th January 2022** - In person launch

LGE2022 Delivery Partners

Elle Dodd, Senior Head of Practice, Collaborate



Elle joined Collaborate in 2020 and leads our system leadership practice, and our work to develop and share Human Learning System approaches. She has recently led on collaborative organisations and places project in Essex, Dumfries, and with the Centre for Ageing Better.

Elle brings experience in policy making and system change from both local and national government. An economist by training, she worked on international development in Whitehall before being posted to the UN where she negotiated the Sustainable Development Goals.

She then transitioned to focus on domestic challenges, leading on devolved economic and social policy for Liverpool City Region, including driving a shift to more people-centred and participatory policymaking. Most recently, at FutureGov, she supported communities across the country to develop place-based investment plans for the Towns Fund.

Elle has a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School, and coaches there in Adaptive Leadership. She is also Treasurer of Open City, a charity which seeks to make London and the urban landscape more equitable, accessible and open.

Jeff Masters, Senior Head of Practice, Collaborate



Jeff Masters is a Senior Head of Practice at Collaborate, leading our systems leadership programmes with the Active Partnerships network and with Active Essex; our place-based work in Kirklees, Barnet, and Gateshead; and our 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 where he studied adaptive leadership.

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.



Sarah Johnston (PSTA - Chief Operating Officer and RedQuadrant Executive Director)



Sarah will be working with you as a coach for Leading Greater Essex 2022. She is a highly knowledgeable and experienced leader who has worked with an extensive range of organisations and stakeholders over the last 25 years at a local, regional, and national level.

Sarah has an excellent understanding of the challenges local authorities and their partners across the system face in commissioning having worked in public services for over 20 years. Recent organisations Sarah has worked with include the Metropolitan Police Service, the States of Guernsey, HMCTS and numerous local authorities.

Sarah has worked on numerous commissioning academies including Devon, Cornwall and Somerset and is not afraid to challenge and support others to help them create bespoke learning experiences even in challenging times. As a qualified coach Sarah and an experienced OD practitioner and facilitator Sarah is trained in many different tools and techniques which she combines and builds on to encourage people to think and behave differently.

Sarah has a special interest in helping internal enabling teams support commissioning.