



## Profile

Senior Leader and Strategist | Highly experienced in service and systematic co-design, transformation, research, and successful implementation. Passionate about creating sustainable social impact, innovation, and value.

Design | Research | Psychology | Leadership

*"I have a passion for making things happen."*

📍 Essex, UK | Remote Working Preference

# RACHEL A. WOOD

## Top Skills

- Leadership and Mentoring
- Service and Systematic Design (HCD)
- Co-design and Design Education
- Design Research (UX/CX/UXR)
- Psychology (inc. behavioural science)

## Leadership Style:

visionary | change orientated |  
participative | ideological |

## Current Board Memberships:

MaxAbility Board Member

## Mobile:

+44 (0) 7775 835381

 E-Mail: [woodrachel@gmail.com](mailto:woodrachel@gmail.com)

## LinkedIn (inc. skills & training):

[www.linkedin.com/in/rachelannewood](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rachelannewood)

Insta and Threads: [@rachela.wood](https://www.instagram.com/rachela.wood)

X (Twitter): @rachelawood

## Experience



### Sept 2024 to date – Head of Customer Journey (Maximus UK) - Remote

- Led strategic transformation of customer journeys (x 33) across Health, Justice, and Employability, championing end-to-end service improvement at portfolio level.
- Established and scaled a cohesive customer journey ecosystem and roadmap, aligning cross-sector products and services with user needs and business priorities.
- Embedded customer voice through UAT, co-design, and insight-driven iteration, ensuring inclusive design and measurable service outcomes.
- Led backlog prioritisation by establishing an evidence-based persona and user story library to enhance product relevance and operational delivery.
- Provided product leadership and strategic guidance, influencing stakeholders to drive customer focused improvement and innovation.



### Nov 2020 to date - Service Design Lead (Basildon Council) - Remote

- Performance reporting (OKRs) and leading on the Council achieving and successfully implementing service design maturity, Gov, Service Manual standards, and ISO-9241-210.
- Leading and managing 30 matrix service design teams and projects through user experience research, journey management, end-to-end solutions, and delivery (inc. digital technology, and people orientated service delivery transformation).

## Professional Strengths

- Strong organisational skills inc. programme and portfolio management.
- Participative, relational, and collaborative leadership skills.
- Ability to manage simultaneous requests, with a result orientation.
- Ability to maintain high performance standards in fast-paced sprint, multi-agency, test and learn, and agile, lean environments.
- Has a good eye for detail, with strong written, analytic, and presentational skills.
- Effective evidence informed decision making, and problem- solving skills.

## Education and Memberships

- PhD Researcher OU Design Group (Parenting Education) from Oct 2022)
- MSc Forensic Psychology – Coventry University
- Postgraduate Certificate in Integrated Centre Leadership (Level 7) Middlesex University
- BSc in Psychology 2:1 OU
- BSc in Social Sciences with Social Policy 2:1 OU
- Graduate Member of the British Psychological Society
- Individual Certified Member of the Global Association of Applied Behavioural Scientists

- Successfully embedded and executed the Council's Service Design Framework and Roadmap.
- Provided cross Government Service Assessments (Design)



### **2015 – Oct 2020 - Service Design and Research Lead (A Better Start Southend – Early Years Alliance) - Hybrid**

- Producing and presenting research, insight, and evaluations to drive successful 'test and learn' service delivery inc. an innovative communication and language service (achieving 7% improvement in outcomes).
- Leading and managing a complex portfolio of innovative and science-based service designs (through a strategic partnership).
- Initiating and leading on transformational theories of change and logic modelling for a £40m programme, and portfolio of projects.
- Successful execution, publication, and implementation of [Service Design](#), and Evaluation Frameworks
- Active member of the Senior Programme Team, Boards, and governance groups.



### **2014 – 2015 - Research Lead | Funding Bid Writer (Early Years Alliance – A Better Start Southend) On-Site**

- Lead researcher, and funding bid writer in a small team that successfully obtained £40m for a ten-year early year's programme.
- Co-Leading the mobilisation, implementation, project plans and fund mapping for a complex project portfolio (inc. 30 projects).
- Leading parenting and health intervention research, and service designs.



### **2004 – 2014 - Leadership and Management - various (Estuary Housing Association) On-Site**

- Leadership and management of a large multi-agency staff team inc. a £250k annual community development budget.
- Transforming satisfaction in service delivery from 70% to 95% (and increasing reach to Centre by 20%).
- Successful execution and management of successful high value bids and grant applications (inc. [commissioning of oral history publication](#)).



### **1988 – 2004 - Various roles inc. Higher Executive Officer (HM Customs and Excise) On-Site**

Team Management, Project Management, Managing an IT Helpdesk, Communication and Procurement Teams, ITIL Service Design, Quality Management (ISO 9001), Trained trainer and Facilitator