



Profile

Senior leader with a proven track record of design-led transformation, operating model change, and service innovation to deliver scalable impact and business value across complex organisations 📍 Essex, UK

✉ E-mail - woodrachel@ymail.com | 📱 Mobile - 07775 835381

LinkedIn - www.linkedin.com/in/rachelannewood

RACHEL A. WOOD

Leadership Style:

visionary | change orientated
| participative | ideological |

Top Skills

- Service Design & Systemic Design (HCD)
- Digital & End-to-End Service Transformation
- Portfolio & Programme Leadership
- Operating Model & Change Management
- Customer & Citizen Journey Management
- User Research (UX), Research (mixed methods), and Insight
- Stakeholder, Governance & Assurance
- Agile, Lean & Test-and-Learn Delivery

Current Board Memberships:

[Global Association of Applied Behavioural Scientists \(GAABS\)](#)
[Editorial Board Member](#)

Experience

Sept 2024 to April 2026 - Head of Customer Journey (Maximus UK - Global services to Government) - Remote

- Led service and ecosystem transformation across 53 customer and citizen journeys in a regulated public sector environment.
- Delivered measurable improvements in service trust (+6.75%) and operational effectiveness through evidence-led, user-centred change.
- Provided senior product leadership, setting strategic backlog prioritisation and influencing executive decision-making.
- Defined and implemented a unified customer and citizen journey roadmap, aligning services with user need, regulation, and organisational priorities.
- Championed end-to-end service improvement, embedding ownership, governance, and continuous improvement across delivery teams.
- Embedded the Voice of the Customer (VoC) through user research, UAT, and co-design, ensuring inclusive and compliant outcomes.

Nov 2020 to Aug 2024 - Service Design Lead (Basildon Council - Local Government services) - Remote

- Led service design performance management through Objectives and Key Results (OKRs).
- Oversaw 33 matrixed service design teams and programmes, spanning user research, journey management, and end-to-end service transformation and change across digital technologies, policy, and people-centred delivery.
- Established and governed the Council's Service Design Framework and Roadmap, ensuring consistent assurance, compliance, and continuous improvement.

Professional Strengths

- Strategic organisational capability, with programme and portfolio management expertise.
- Inclusive, collaborative leader effective across complex stakeholder environments.
- Decisive under pressure, balancing priorities while maintaining delivery.
- High-performance leadership and hands on in agile, and test-and-learn environments, sustaining pace and quality across programmes.
- Strong analytical, written, and presentational skills, with attention to detail and clarity.
- Evidence-led problem-solver enabling confident decisions in complex contexts.
- Integrating AI, innovation and emerging technologies responsibly.

Education and Memberships

- PhD Researcher (Design, Engineering and Innovation) - Open University (Current) including providing design education.
- MSc Forensic Psychology | PG Cert Integrated Centre Leadership
- BSc Psychology | BSc Social Sciences (Social Policy with Criminology)
- Graduate Member (and psychology media contact) - British Psychological Society | Certified Member - GAABS

- Led cross-government Service Assessments (Design), offering expert assurance and constructive challenge.

2015 - Oct 2020 - Service Design and Research Lead (Early Years Alliance - Strategic Partnership with Southend Council) - Hybrid

- Produced and presented health research and evaluations to drive 'test-and-learn' delivery inc. an innovative communication and language service (achieving 7% improvement in outcomes).
- Led a complex portfolio of innovative and science-based service designs.
- Initiated and led 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 - Strategic Partnership with Southend Council) On-Site

- Led health-based research, and funding bid writing in a small team that successfully obtained £40m for a ten-year early year's programme.
- Led the mobilisation, implementation, and fund mapping for a complex project portfolio (inc. thirty projects).
- Led parenting and health intervention research, and service designs.

2004 - 2014 - Leadership and Management - various including Head of Community Development (Estuary Housing Association) On-Site

- Led a multi-agency team and managed a £250k community development budget.
- Increased service-delivery satisfaction 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 senior and higher roles (HM Customs and Excise - Central Government) On-Site

Civil servant with roles including team and project management, IT service management, web design, procurement, statistical analysis, training and facilitation, and quality management (ISO 9001)