

Essex Association of Local Councils

Annual General Meeting & Conference



Speaker Profiles
21st September 2023





Cllr Louise McKinlay, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Levelling Up and the Economy

Cllr Louise McKinlay is currently the Deputy Leader of Essex County Council (ECC) following her re-election in May 2021, as well as being the Cabinet Member for Community, Equality, Partnership and Performance. She is proudly the first female deputy Leader of ECC.

During her first 100 days in post, she has set up a Safety Advisory Group, which is leading on improving women's safety across the County, has expanded the summer holiday activity programme to target and support more deprived and working families than ever before and developing a new Plan for Essex Libraries, designed to expand and increase the offer available to once again place libraries at the heart of communities. Importantly, Cllr McKinlay is also actively leading for the organisation on the priority area of Levelling Up, working with Justine Greening MP, Chair of the Levelling Up Goals, to refine and promote the work we are undertaking nationally to improve resident's lives. She also sits on the Community Wellbeing Board at the Local Government Association.

Cllr McKinlay was previously elected as Leader of Brentwood District Council in May 2009, as the youngest ever female Council Leader in the Country. She held the position for ten years, before stepping down in May 2019. During her tenure, she was short-listed for the LGiU Council Leader of the Year Award in 2017, from over 200 submissions.

In May 2017, she was elected to Essex County Council for the Brentwood Hutton division and was immediately brought on to the Cabinet as Member for Finance and Resources, before later going on in May 2019 to become the Cabinet Member for Children and Families.

Professionally, she spent a number of years in the City working in Investment Banks and established her own consultancy company, supporting businesses in reducing their costs, managing projects and leading change and transformation. Louise also owns and runs a property company with her husband.

She is committed to supporting the local community and worked in Brentwood to establish the Hutton Community Centre, bringing together local schools, faith groups, sporting clubs and organisations from the area to help run and sustain the facility.

Louise is married with two primary school aged children.



Tracy Rudling, Chief Executive Officer at Community 360

Tracy's working life started with a local Colchester construction company developing their accountancy systems, but she felt very early in her career that something around developing people and reducing inequalities was what would truly motivate her.

She knows what it is like to face adversity and this gives her great empathy with the people who are supported by the Essex charities she now champions. It was taking part in a half-marathon for a good cause that originally set her on her long career in the charity sector. From a young age she was a very keen runner – she completed several runs to raise money for charity, because even then she recognised that charities can make a very big difference to people's lives. She then made the life-changing decision to give up a well-paid career in industry to follow her dream of working in the charity sector.

Tracy joined the team, then just five-strong, at Colchester Community Voluntary Services – renamed Community360 in 2017 – and since then has co-ordinated the work of Essex charities and voluntary organisations to help them offer as much support as possible to local people. She has been in her current Chief Executive role since 2010.

Community360 (C360) has been running since 1968 as an independent charitable infrastructure organisation whose aim is to inspire groups to seize opportunities and become more enterprising and sustainable. It exists to assist both members of the public and voluntary and community organisations by providing passionate, intelligent leadership as well as practical information, advice and support, which can range from establishing relationships with statutory groups to guiding local voluntary initiatives.

Amongst other initiatives, C360 has been responsible for setting up the first social prescribing project in Essex – now rolled-out countrywide - establishing the One Colchester Community Hub along with Colchester City Council and overseeing the Essex Dementia Alliance.

Tracy's expertise in finance and company development have been demonstrated consistently - C360 has grown exponentially under her leadership and at the time of writing has over 100 staff, a turnover of over £1.5 million and an expansive reach across North East Essex, with bases in Braintree and Tiptree in addition to Colchester, and its Community Transport scheme having merged with that of Chelmsford.

Tracy's achievements include setting up the One Colchester Strategic Board, of which she is now Chair. She is also on the Boards of the IAG (the Police Independent Advisory Group), the NEE Children Partnership Board and the NEE Health Alliance Board, amongst many others which value her as the representative voice between the voluntary and statutory sectors.

Outside of work, Tracy runs her own livery yard business and her family owns a construction company – through which she is able to further support her community by employing local people to work at her 18-acre smallholding near her home in Tiptree.

Louise Joyce, Relationship Manager Active Essex



Louise Joyce is a Relationship Manager at Active Essex, as part of the senior management team she leads our Strengthening Communities priority from our sector Fit for the Future strategy. This includes working alongside our hub locality leads across greater Essex and with over 100 locally trusted organisations to ensure that all communities are able to benefit from engaging of physical activity and sport to build resilience, connection and wellbeing. As part of this work Louise leads on our tackling inequalities work, sport and youth crime prevention, the Essex ActivAte holiday activity and food programme as well as our place based approach to supporting communities. She also supports our other strategic priorities including; Active Environments, Children and Young People, Levelling up Health and Wellbeing and Sport and Physical Activity.



Justin Griggs, Head of Policy & Communications National Association of Local Councils

Justin has been head of policy and communications at the National Association of Local Councils - the membership organisation representing the first tier of local government in England - since 2018 and has held several roles since joining in 2000. He has previously worked for a district council and a unitary council as well as in the private sector.

Justin has extensive experience in leading successful national campaigns, influencing Parliament and successive governments, and overseeing major programmes. He has played an instrumental role in NALC campaigns to change legislation to give councils more powers, reform business rates and create new councils, as well as securing government funding.

Originally from south-east Kent, he attended Staffordshire University where he studied business and management at undergraduate and postgraduate level, spending a placement year in the chief executive's department of Stoke-on-Trent City Council working on local government reorganisation. He is a member of the Chartered Management Institute and the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.

Justin is a keen runner and member of Plumstead Runners in southeast London, has an eclectic taste in music including a passion for musicals, and lives in Kent with his partner and their three school-age children. He is one of two members of his family to feature in the Wisden cricketing almanack and retains his childhood ambition to play professional snooker!

Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of Essex



Roger Hirst was elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex in May 2016, before joint police and fire governance had been established. However, his core belief that safe and secure communities are the bedrock on which we build well-being and prosperity for all, remains central to his vision for both the services for which he is now responsible.

The Commissioner is a strong advocate for prevention and partnership: he has championed the role of the Special Constabulary, and has secured the resources for increase in the number of officers within Essex to provide officers with the technology they need to be more efficient visible within their communities.

Mr Hirst became the first Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in October 2017 and continues to work nationally and locally to build stronger links between emergency services and help create more secure communities.

Jane Gardner, Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of Essex



Jane supports the PFCC in the development of policy and strategy regarding policing and fire and rescue. She helps to identify and deliver solutions for the challenges faced by Essex, building ever stronger bonds with local authorities, the voluntary sector and the people of Essex. She works closely with local people and with key local agencies to help develop and deliver strong and safe communities, and ensure everyone feels they can contribute to identifying, developing and delivering local solutions.

Having worked with communities across Essex for many years for the County Council and through seven years' experience serving as a Special Constable with Essex Police, Jane brings a range of experience to the role.

Jane helps the PFCC maintain an effective and efficient police service and deliver an effective and efficient fire and rescue service. She has helped deliver the ambitious programme of police transformation and supported the closer collaboration with Essex County Fire & Rescue Service.



Rick Hylton, Chief Fire Officer/ Executive, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Rick joined Cambridgeshire fire and rescue service in 1997. Having worked in a variety of roles he was appointed Head of Community Safety in 2010, where he delivered a progressive approach to targeted home safety. Focusing on data sharing arrangements with partners to identify, triage and deliver to the most vulnerable. Rick established the first joint education and enforcement team with Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire Police, in addition to implementing the services first volunteer scheme.

During this time Rick led a review of the protection function implementing the business safety competence framework including the up skilling of operational crews and delivering the county's business safety hub. A joint initiative between district and county council that built upon primary authority schemes to provide business with a simpler process to access advice from a range of regulators. In 2015 Rick led the service to achieve Excellence in Equality and inclusion.

In 2016, Rick was appointed Assistant Chief Fire Officer with responsibilities for service delivery and operational support, where he led the Service IRMP implementation including changes to crewing systems and the introduction of portable misting systems for vulnerable persons. Rick was also the executive officer responsible for leading Cambridgeshire through the first HMICFRS inspection process.

In 2019, Rick joined Essex County Fire and Rescue Service as the deputy chief fire officer. Where he had responsibilities for strategic planning, assurance and performance and was the strategic lead for collaboration, working with partners to deliver on the Police Fire and Crime Commissioners local business case. In 2020 Rick was the co-chair of the Essex Strategic Coordination Group for the Covid 19 pandemic.

In January 2022, Rick was appointed as the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

Rick has led the Home Safety Committee since 2015. In addition, he was the National Fire Chief Council gold group lead for prevention through the pandemic response. Rick has a master's in public administration from Warwick University. He is married with two children.

BJ Harrington QPM Essex Police Chief Constable



Having been seconded as Deputy Chief Constable to Essex in 2017 BJ took over as Chief Constable on the 4th of October 2018. BJ leads one of the largest non-metropolitan forces with over five and a half thousand officers, staff, and volunteers within a force that comprises of many diverse challenges for modern policing.

BJ has utilized his experiences gained while serving in the Metropolitan Police Service great effect and has worked tirelessly on building community confidence within Essex. He has also sought to strengthen and develop multi agency partnerships across a range of issues seeking to help the community, keep them safe and of course, catch criminals. He continues to lead, endorse, and enhance the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy within Essex Police.

BJ has a Post Graduate Diploma in Police Leadership from Leicester University, and is also a graduate of the Cabinet Office Leaders UK senior public service leadership programme. He was awarded the Queen's Police Medal in the 2022 New Year Honours.



Garry Brown & Katherine Brown External Affairs, Blachere Illuminations



Blachere Illumination are a world leading manufacturer of Festive lighting. We are proud to manufacture our own products, and especially proud to offer bio degradable products to our customers which are now made from recycled plastic bottles. With over 28 branches worldwide and 50 years of making lights with care and passion Blachere Illumination are here to help you bring life to your town/parish this year.

Katherine joined Blachere's team at the end of 2019 as part of the external affairs team, working alongside Garry Brown whom many of you will know. Prior to this she undertook a 14 year term as clerk for Caernarfon Council. Many of you will know Katherine as she spent 5 years as Chairman for the SLCC. A true ambassador for the sector. Her interests are singing, playing piano and since Covid-19 has found a new love for Baking and crafting.

Join Katherine and Garry to hear how Blachere Illuminations can help you increase your footfall this Christmas and help you reach your environmental targets. You will hear all about their biodegradable products and a great opportunity to see a range of products they can offer. (there is something for every sized budget) Blachere Illuminations are a global company with over 50 years of experience.



Mark Tomkins, Founder & Creative Director



Mark is the Founder and Creative Director at Aubergine and website accessibility expert & champion. Aubergine are the UK's leaders in providing fully compliant and accessible websites for town & parish councils.

- 30+ years experience working in the internet
- Author of the NALC Website Accessibility & Publishing Guidebook
- Advisor to 500+ town & parish councils on website accessibility compliance
- Public speaker & trainer
- Parish councillor of 10+ years
- Newly ILCA qualified

In his talk, Mark provides step by step guidance and tips you can use to improve the accessibility of your council's website and the .gov.uk framework. Aubergine have built and support hundreds of town and parish council websites with more joining the platform each week. Councils often ask why they need to do this? Put simply, aside from it being a legal requirement since 2020, it's the right thing to do. 1 in 5 of every community in the country has a disability or situation that makes it hard for them to access the information from a website without barriers if it's not accessible. As a public body, you must make sure that what you publish is available to your whole community. It's the right thing to do and opens up a greater Community Engagement.

With a few, easy to learn tips and guidance, by the end of the talk you will understand the techniques and process that will improve the access to information for those in your communities that otherwise would struggle.

Emily Berry, Utility Aid Partnerships Manager



Emily has a passion for supporting the third sector save time and money on their energy provision. Working as Utility Aid's Partnership Manager, Emily is acutely aware of the challenges the sector face and uses this knowledge to help shape our services and deliver solutions. She believes that collaboration is key to achieving a sustainable future and regularly holds webinars and discussion groups to provide tips which will help you identify potential areas of cost recovery and support you in reducing energy consumption and wastage.



Steve Parkinson The Parkinson Partnership LLP



Steve Parkinson is an AAT Licensed Accountant with over 30 years of local government finance experience. He served as Town Clerk for Alton in Hampshire from 2001 to 2015, having previously worked for several principal authorities. In 2015 Steve started his own accountancy practice, The Parkinson Partnership LLP, which provides specialist VAT and finance advice, along with training, to 37 county associations of local councils, as well as many individual councils.

Steve will be presenting a short talk about his work with NALC to update the 2019 Model Financial Regulations for England and Wales. The model financial regulations are part of a support package that local (parish and town) councils receive through their NALC and county association membership. They are an essential tool for councils of all sizes, setting out the framework within which the council ensures responsible, sustainable and compliant management of its finances.



Jamie Charters, CCLA Sales Support & Admin Manager

Jamie is the primary contact for all Local Authority Sales & Administration queries. He joined CCLA in 2001 and has a wealth of experience in client-facing roles. Jamie holds a diploma in Private Client Investment Advice and Management (PCIAM). In his talk, Jamie will give an overview of CCLA investment banking for Local Authorities. CCLA's clients are involved in every aspect of public life and their investments make an important contribution to their achievements. Their ambition is to deliver trusted, responsibly managed, strongly performing products and services aligned to the clients' values and purpose. A description of Good Investment that most people would recognise.



CCLA

Dan Thompson, ESN Project Lead, Essex Shed Network

Dan Thompson is the newly appointed Project Lead for the Essex Shed Network Project.

Maldon & District Community Voluntary service (M&DCVS) & UCAN are overseeing this project in partnership and his role is to lead on the overall project management.

Dan aims to continue to support the already existing Men's sheds throughout Essex, helping grow and build the network further. Men's Sheds increase the reach and accessibility to men and the wider communities throughout Essex.



**ESSEX
SHED
NETWORK**

Cllr Peter Schwier, Climate Czar & Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling



Peter Schwier has been a district councillor for seven years and was elected to Essex County Council in 2021 and subsequently became the Council's Climate Czar. In 2023, he changed cabinet role to Climate Czar & Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling.

Climate action is a high priority for Essex County Council. This will involve many different initiatives, moving towards becoming carbon neutral as soon as possible.

By profession, Peter is a retired farmer with a degree in agriculture, giving him a close working relationship and understanding of the environment. He also has experience running a small engineering business. The experience of running small businesses and his rural knowledge are assets which will be of great assistance when applied to the larger needs of the County Council.

Peter has lived in both France and America where he gained a commercial pilots licence. He has always been interested in renewable energy and his house benefits from a large array of solar panels combined with battery technology.

Tom Day, Head of the Energy & Low Carbon programme



Tom Day is Head of the Energy and Low Carbon programme at Essex County Council. He leads the Council's work on renewable energy and energy efficiency in Essex encouraging investment in renewable energy to help the transition to net zero. He leads the Council's work on enabling retrofit of housing stock in Essex; supporting the roll out of the Government's Help to Heat programme and working with communities and other local partners to encourage more retrofit schemes to happen in Essex. He also leads on our work on supporting and growing the community energy sector in the County, working with Parishes and local community groups to enable local action on developing renewable energy and retrofit projects.

Exhibitor Stands

	Active Essex	Louise Voyce
	Aubergine	Mark Tomkins
	Blachere Illumination	Garry Brown Katherine Brown
	CCLA	Jamie Charters Mark Davis
	Essex shed Network	Dan Thompson Sarah Troop
	Fire and rescue	Oliver Everott Alison Loades Roy Evans
	Ingletonwood	Sam Taylor Chris Wells
	PFCC	Darren Horsman
	Essex Police	Les Hawkins Andy Bryant
	Photographer	David Jackman
	Playquip	Bryan Longman Peter Sander
	Ride London	Christopher Davey Alexandra Cadwallander
	United In kind Coach RCCE	Karis Galiano Kelly Coombs
	Utility Aid	Stephanie Steele Emily Berry
	Vaughtons	Rob Armour

The Essex Association of Local Councils
would like to thank our Sponsors
for their continued support and
financial commitment to our
Annual General Meeting
and Conference 2023.

The Essex Association of Local Councils
42B High Street, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1AH

01371 879722 | www.ealc.gov.uk

