



2024-2025

# Impact Report



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## ECL Board



**Wendy Thomas**  
Lived Experience Lead  
Non Executive Director



**Michael McDonagh**  
Chairman  
Non Executive Director



**Louise Beauchamp**  
Speak Up Board Lead  
Non Executive Director



**Edward Bloomfield**  
Audit and Risk  
Committee Chair  
Non Executive Director



**Peter Fairley**  
Managing Director



**Jenni Aylen**  
Director of People  
and Change



**Mark Gould-Coates**  
Director of Digital Transformation  
and Strategic Planning



**Joe Coogan**  
Chief Operating  
Officer



# Chairman's Statement

Michael McDonagh | Chairman

**ECL delivers excellent outcomes for the people we work with and the communities we serve. While our primary focus is Essex, we're also proud to be the provider of choice for an increasing number of local authorities outside of Essex.**

Our teams and services epitomise our core values of caring, excellence, integrity, and teamwork, supporting more than 13,560 people to be more independent. Customer satisfaction remains high, with 96% of people using our services saying they would recommend us to friends or family. I am proud to call every member of ECL a colleague.

Innovation remains a priority. One of the most successful pilots trialled of late has been the Delegated Assessments service in south Essex, which was so effective it was expanded across the whole of Essex.

ECL and Essex County Council (ECC) have invested significantly in our buildings in the last 12 months, and considerable property improvements have been made. Our strong relationship with ECC is built on respect and shared common values. The success we achieve reflects the high-calibre teams, vision and leadership within the Council.

Our expansion into the London Boroughs continued with the start of a six-year reablement contract in Barking and

Dagenham following a successful one-year pilot. The reablement service in West Sussex also grew considerably with ECL being awarded a new, larger six-year contract by West Sussex County Council starting on 1 April 2025.

This year we welcomed three new Non-Executive Directors: Wendy Thomas, Lived Experience Lead; Edward Bloomfield, Audit and Risk Committee Chair and Louise Beauchamp, Speak Up Board Lead. These three highly experienced individuals provide strategic guidance to our Executive team and are already making an impact. I am grateful for the personal support and counsel they provide to me as the Board Chair. I would also like to thank Peter Fairley and the Executive Team for their tireless energy and passion for everything we do.

During my six years as Chair, we have unrelentingly kept quality at the heart of everything we do, and this will not change moving forward. Our quality, care and outstanding people make us one of the most successful local authority trading companies in the country and I continue to be proud of our organisation and the services we provide.



# Managing Director's Welcome

Peter Fairley | Managing Director

**Welcome to our review of 2024-2025. It has been a great year for ECL. We've had some significant highlights, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our employees who work tirelessly to make a positive difference to those that use our services.**

While there were no CQC Assessments during the last 12 months, our day services had internal annual Quality Assurance Assessments. I am pleased to say that all that were assessed in this time received a rating of Good.

Our Inclusive Employment Service supported 541 adults with learning disabilities and autism into employment surpassing the contract target of 500 people in five years. We continue to achieve our contract targets and more importantly, to change lives. Something that was recognised in some very positive BBC coverage in March 2025.

One of the areas this service is growing is with its expansion into Supported Internships in South Essex. We look forward to seeing how the first year of this project pans out.

This year ECL navigated a new reablement contract model with Essex County Council which focuses on the number of customers finishing with the service as opposed to

care hours delivered. This has seen great results so far, averaging an 11% increase in 'finishers' meaning that more people are benefitting from our great services and have been supported to regain their independence or reduce their ongoing care needs.

Our Essex reablement service is now supporting 7% more people to finish their reablement care each week than last March, helping more people return to self-caring than last year. We also successfully bid for new contracts in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and in West Sussex.

Over 450 people in Essex received a sensory support service from ECL, well above the contract expectation, as demand continues to grow. Nearly 400 of those started their support within 12 weeks and met their care goals within the three months.

We continue to deliver great outcomes to the people who receive our services. As we look ahead to the next financial year, we aim to continue to consistently challenge ourselves to be the best organisation we can be, making a difference to people's lives through the delivery of excellent care and support.





# Our Year in Summary:

**13,564** customers supported to independence.

**6**

year reablement contract secured in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

**96%** would recommend ECL to friends or family.

**6**

year new reablement contract in West Sussex.

**97%** of day service customers met their outcomes.

**646**

adults with learning disabilities supported by day services, Inclusive Employment and Community Connector services.

**87%** of those receiving reablement support had improved outcomes.

**541**

people supported in 5 years - Inclusive Employment exceeds LIVE contract target.

**1,841** customers referred to our sensory service, a 43% increase.

**1**

year Community Connector pilot extended for a second year.



# Awards Success

It was another great year for awards success. Our Inclusive Employment service won a prestigious MJ Award in the Building Diversity and Inclusion category for its employment partnership with the East of England Co-Op.

We also achieved finalist positions in both the MJ Awards and the Social Care Leadership awards, showcasing our excellent services on a national scale.



ECL Ward-led enablement was a finalist in the MJ Awards Care and Health Integration category, receiving a highly commended accolade at the awards ceremony.



ECL Regional Business Manager Debbie Edgell was a finalist in the Social Care Leadership Awards Partnership Champion category for her work with our NHS colleagues to launch Ward-led Enablement.



Our Day Opportunities Service provides tailored activities in the local community for older people living with Alzheimer’s, dementia and Parkinson’s as well as adults with learning disabilities and/or autism. Our day centres offer a range of engaging activities designed to help maintain independence and encourage greater connection with the community.



Spend a day with ECL Basildon Older People’s Service

How we performed:

**320** customers supported to maintain or increase independence.

**97%** of customers met the outcomes they were aspiring to, a 16% increase from last year.

Outcomes include: remaining independent, travel training and ASDAN qualifications.

Service breakdown:

**68** customers with learning disabilities and/or autism supported.

**252** older people supported.

ECL Braintree day centre makes a dream come true

ECL’s Braintree Learning Disabilities Day Centre made a dream come true for Susie Brennan, by organising for her to meet her pop hero, Jason Donovan.

Susie, 43, has been a huge Jason Donovan fan since he began his career appearing in the hit Australian soap Neighbours.

Susie who has learning disabilities, epilepsy and has also overcome breast cancer, has attended the centre twice a week for almost 20 years. In recent years she has been battling brain cancer, and her health is gradually declining.



She has always shared her love of Jason Donovan with her support workers and friends at the centre, making him the theme of the activities she takes part in. For example, making a scrapbook with pictures of him in which she updates regularly and carries everywhere she goes.

Susie loves to sing and so the team hold regular Karaoke sessions where she delights in singing all her favourite Jason Donovan songs, often performing a duet of ‘Especially for You’ with support worker, Kathryn.

It was ECL support workers Kathryn Reid and Michelle Embleton who made Susie’s dream of meeting her idol a

reality. Upon hearing news that Jason would be performing locally, Michelle got her tickets to his concert at the Cliffs Pavilion on Saturday 1 March. Kathryn then collaborated with Jason’s manager to get VIP access for Susie and arranged for her to meet Jason.

Susie was over the moon to meet Jason who spent time chatting to her and signing her treasured scrapbook and t-shirt. Susie told Jason that her favourite songs are ‘Everyday’ and ‘Too Many Broken Hearts.’

She said: “It was a truly unforgettable experience; I have loved my gorgeous boy (her pet name for Jason) forever and it’s a life -long dream to have met him.”

**Kathryn and Mandy said: “To say Susie loves Jason is an understatement! She adores him. Meeting him was the experience of a lifetime for her. It’s a memory she will treasure. Her health has worsened over the last few years, and we’re so pleased to have been able to make it happen for her.”**







The Community Connectors pilot is a partnership between ECL and Essex County Council that supports people with learning disabilities and/or autism into adult education, volunteering schemes, social groups, and activities. The small team provides person-centred support to those who face challenges when it comes to finding social connections and employability skills. The ethos is that community engagement promotes independence, increased confidence, and self-esteem.

ECL Community Connectors on the BBC

Following the news of the government’s plans to reduce benefits by tightening the criteria for disability payments, ECL worked with the BBC Politics East Programme to provide case study examples to highlight the importance of helping people with learning disabilities and/or autism into work.

The footage was shown on Sunday 23 March 2025 on BBC Politics East and featured as a story on the BBC website. Subsequently ECL Managing Director, Peter Fairley and Melanie’s mum, Cath were interviewed live on BBC Essex on Monday 24 March.



View BBC online coverage

Vasukie’s story

Vasukie Manmathan, a 41-year-old from Essex, is a fantastic example of how individuals can flourish with the right support. When Katie from the ECL Community Connector team first met Vasukie and her sister, Vasukie was so shy that she struggled to speak for herself, allowing her sister to communicate on her behalf. Recognising that she could benefit from activities to build her social skills and confidence, Katie recommended the One Colchester Community Hub, which offers a variety of social groups and activities. Vasukie was enthusiastic about the idea and began attending the hub regularly, particularly enjoying the friendship and board game groups. When Katie caught up with her again, she was delighted by the transformation; she now spoke up for herself and even shared a new long-term ambition of finding paid employment.

As Vasukie had no previous work experience, she was open to gaining experience by starting with volunteer work. Katie arranged for her to volunteer one day a week at the East Anglia’s Children’s Hospices (EACH) store in Colchester. Katie initially accompanied Vasukie, helping her to become familiar with travelling to and from the shop, guiding her on how to sort the clothing donations, and helping her feel at ease with her colleagues. Vasukie was eager to learn, and within just three weeks, she had gained enough confidence to manage her tasks entirely independently.

Thanks to ECL Community Connectors, Vasukie is now on an exciting path towards greater independence and fulfilment, with a brighter future ahead.

“My next goal is to attend college to study an IT class. I couldn’t have imagined achieving these things before I met Katie, so I’m very grateful!”



Scan QR code to watch Elaine’s story



Scan QR code to watch Melanie’s story

How we performed:

105 people supported into volunteering, social groups, or adult education.

17 working towards paid employment as their end goal.

6 achieved paid employment.



## Providing career options for young people with SEND

For young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) navigating further education and deciding 'what's next?' after leaving school can be a daunting experience. Supported Internships are an appealing option to many young people in this situation as they provide a blend of hands-on work experience and continued education. This mix of classroom-based activity and work provide interns with more options upon completion as they can either seek paid employment or continue to further education.

This year ECL joined forces with USP College to deliver a Supported Internship transition-to-work education programme for young people with a current Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) between the ages of 18 to 24. Part of the DFN Project SEARCH programme, this collaboration

has brought about the Amazon Supported Internship, designed to help these individuals move from education to the workplace, combining training with real-life work experience at Amazon's fulfilment centre in Tilbury.

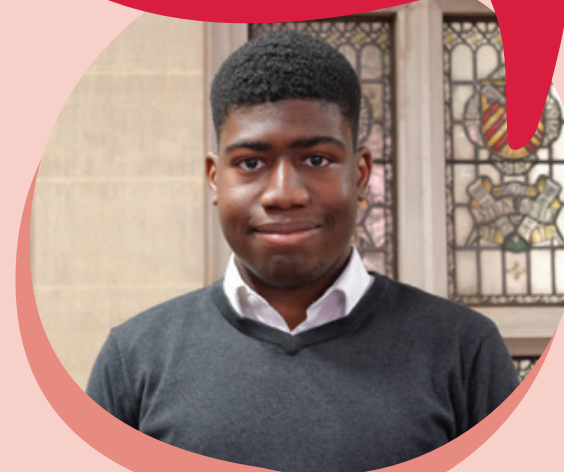
Interns are supported throughout by ECL job coaches and Amazon professional mentors and combine classroom-based vocational training and reflection as well as gaining valuable experience of the workplace.

All involved have agreed that it has been a resounding success for both Amazon and the interns to date, and ECL hopes to welcome a second cohort of students in September/October 2025.



"I think my internship is going great. My favourite part is receiving the goods. I like that I can put what we learn in the classroom into practise on the shop floor. I have more confidence now and commute to work no problem thanks to ECL's travel training. I would like to work at Amazon when I graduate."

Jake Lawrence, Amazon Intern



Jake Lawrence, Timi Onabule and Hayden Osagie are taking part in the supported internship programme at the Amazon fulfilment centre in Tilbury.

When asked about their time on the supported internship programme, Timi and Hayden highlighted the processes, work experience and making new friends.

"I've learnt a lot of new things, including the processes and skills needed in the different departments across the fulfilment centre," Timi said. "It's interesting to learn how items are received, sent out and managed

at different stations. I've really enjoyed being on the shop floor and getting that hands-on experience."

Hayden added, "I have learnt a lot of new life skills, and things that I didn't know before. I've loved meeting new people, making friends and hearing their stories, too."

All three students have grown in confidence since joining Amazon, thanks to the support shown to them by Amazon colleagues, ECL job coaches and USP Tutors.

Hayden explained: **"Everyone is really good at breaking information into smaller chunks so we can understand the processes. They make sure things are explained in a way we understand and help in any way they can."**

All three young men are hoping to continue working at Amazon to develop their careers at the company once they graduate from the supported internship programme.





ECL’s Inclusive Employment service supports adults with learning disabilities and/or autism to achieve their ambitions of obtaining paid and meaningful employment.

Everyone is supported into employment by identifying their talents, skills, qualifications, and interests, matching them to ECL’s established network of partnership employers.

Every step of the individual’s journey towards paid employment is supported by developing their CVs, arranging interviews and work trials, as well as work experience if required. The team provides on the job coaching for the employer and employee to maximise success.



Scan QR code to watch Amy’s story

How we performed:

**248** adults with learning disabilities and/or autism supported towards paid work.

**94%** of adults in our service with a vocational profile secured paid employment.

**46%** of candidates remaining in jobs for at least 11 out of 12 months.

**257** businesses in Essex are now disability confident employers thanks to ECL!

**£772,788** in year savings to Essex County Council from placing adults into employment. 



David’s story

David is a 39-year-old animal fan who loves learning. He had been enjoying volunteering at a local nature reserve and was referred to ECL’s Inclusive Employment team who encouraged him to explore the world of work.

David was paired with Inclusive Employment Consultant Caroline, who began to build a picture of the type of role that would appeal to him. Learning about his love of animals, Caroline felt that Marsh Farm would be an ideal opportunity.

Caroline said: **“From the first meeting it was clear that this was going to be a wonderful placement for David. Instead of conducting a traditional interview, we arranged an informal ‘get to know you’ chat before being invited to do a trial shift.”**

David was delighted to have the chance to show what he could do, instead of being appraised in a daunting interview setting, which so often leaves people with learning disabilities and autism at a disadvantage.

He said: **“Some places aren’t very welcoming, but Marsh Farm was brilliant. I think it’s much better to give someone a trial so you can see what they’re capable of, instead of judging a book by its cover.”**

David and his employers have had access to tailored support from ECL’s Inclusive Employment professionals since the beginning and will do for as long as they need it. Before his first shift, Caroline provided a detailed overview of David’s needs and was by his side during his initial

induction and first two weeks on the job. Once he was settled, he was paired with a buddy on site and one of ECL’s Inclusive Employment Job Coaches, Linda, who has become an extension of the Marsh Farm team.

The positive impact working has had on David has been significant. He’s more independent, his confidence has grown. His health has improved, and he’s learnt a range of new skills.

He said: **“This job suits me. Marsh Farm is a very nice place to work. It’s a positive environment and I look forward to coming to work every week because I feel respected here. Every shift is different so it’s never boring.”**





ECL has an in-house clinical team which consists of clinical practitioners including Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Positive Behaviour Advisors, to provide specialist support to people with clinical needs who are accessing ECL day centres and reablement services.

The clinical team also work in conjunction with local NHS professionals, adult social care services, family members and carers as part of a multidisciplinary approach to making sure each person using our services can do so as independently and as safely as possible.



What I love most about my role...  
David Hitchin, Clinical Positive Behaviour Advisor

“The Clinical team cover the clinical needs across ECL’s day services and Inclusive Employment and are available for consultancy across other ECL services if needed. People are referred for behaviour support for different reasons, but primarily it is down to two things, either their quality of life is being impacted in a negative way by their behaviour or because the challenging behaviour is dangerous in some way either to themselves or to others around them.

Every customer’s needs are different and the plans I create are tailored to each individual. My role is to help those supporting the individual to create a capable environment while in our care. Through this we can change that behaviour and improve their quality of life, ensuring they get the most from their time in our services.



“I love that I get to improve people’s quality of life. Individuals having behavioural issues are behaving in a certain way because something about what’s happening in their life is aversive, they are not enjoying it. What I do helps that person build tolerance to the element causing this reaction so that they can enjoy a broader spectrum of activities and social interactions.

I help the people that support that person understand what is causing the behaviour so that the person’s quality of life improves. Knowing that you are improving somebody’s life is the best feeling.”

How we performed:

There was a marked increase in demand for clinical services in 2024-2025.

307 customer referrals, a 32% increase on last year.

Of these:

5 complex case support from Clinical Lead.

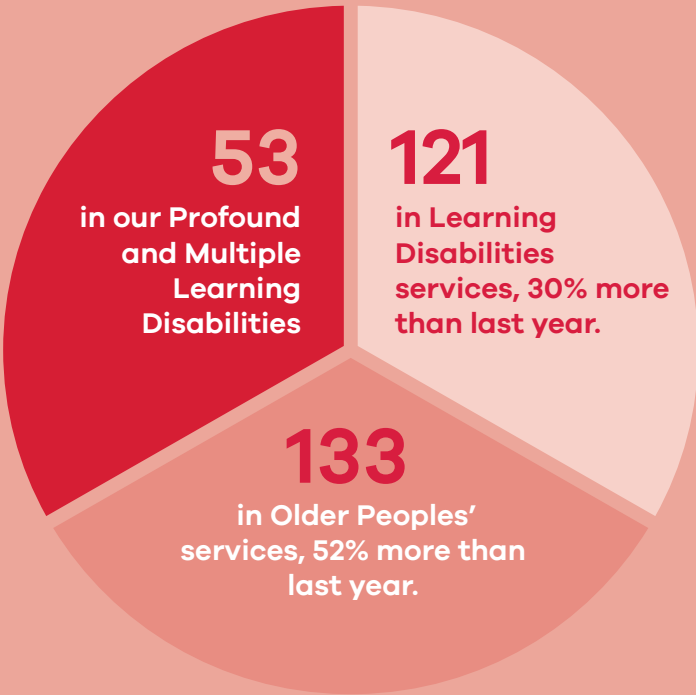
59 Speech and Language Therapy, 44% more than last year.

107 Physiotherapy, 50% more than last year.

38 Positive Behaviour Support, 27% less than last year.

98 Occupational therapy, 32% more than last year.

Service split:





Our Reablement Service within Essex provides short-term support of up to six weeks for individuals to regain the skills to live independently or with reduced care. Essex County Council has calculated that following ECL Reablement, individuals do not need additional social care services for an average of 72 weeks.



Influencing Social Policy

ECL has been working closely with numerous national organisations to share our expertise, systems and processes. As part of this knowledge sharing, ECL has hosted Programme Leads from both NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care so that they can experience our ways of working first-hand. The fact that our operations are considered an example of industry best practice is testament to our strong values and our excellent employees who uphold them daily.



ECL Reablement – a customer’s perspective.

How we performed:

7,531 customers supported, a 7% increase.

67.7% of adults left the service fully self-caring.

10.6 hours reduction in average care needs thanks to service.

88.9% of customers had improved outcomes.

Additional service for ECL reablement customers in South Essex

ECL customers in South East and South West Essex benefit from additional support provided by Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services Ltd. (CAVS). Contracted by ECL, CAVS support bridges the gap that happens when people leave social care support. Putting them in touch with support services that can facilitate what they need in terms of ongoing care once their reablement package ends.

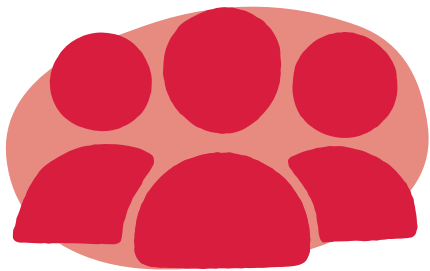
The service provides information and advice to customers and their families in a range of areas including: benefits reviews; support with completing benefit applications; Blue Badge applications; befriending services; community transport; help with social isolation; access to groups and clubs; social prescription services; home help; carers support, funding, and assessments; counselling and bereavement support; dementia support services.

There has been an appointed CAVS co-ordinator supporting customers in the South East region since 2017 and in 2023 a second co-ordinator was appointed to support customers in South West Essex. To date, CAVs has assisted over 5,000 ECL customers and their families.





Our Reablement Service within the London Borough of Havering provides short-term support of up to six weeks for individuals to regain the skills to live independently or with reduced care.



How we performed:

1,269 customers supported.

85.4% of customers had improved outcomes.

93,514 visits completed.

99.7% of visits completed on time.

HomeFirst Trial launches in Havering

ECL’s home first service aims to get people home from hospital as soon as possible via a thorough assessment of their support and equipment needs by an ECL Trusted Assessor.

HomeFirst operated within Havering in 2020 however stopped due to there being no long-term care provider, but now ECL has the reablement contract in Havering it has reinstated the service on a three-month trial basis. The trial began in February 2025 and will end in April 2025.

How it works:

ECL carries out the assessment for all people leaving hospital in place of the hospital therapy team thus freeing up the NHS therapy colleagues’ time to spend with other patients.

Taking the person out of the acute environment often provides a clearer picture of an individual’s capabilities and support needs. People present differently when assessed at home as they tend to feel better and more themselves when they are back in the comfort of their own homes.

ECL teams work closely with key partners involved, including Age UK, CCG, Red Cross, Havering Local Authority, Community Treatment Team, District Nurses and other community services.

Outcomes:

This model reduces referrals into long-term domiciliary care packages and supports a reduction in the level of care visits needed.

In three months\*:

- 228 adults have gone through reablement.
- 16% of these were readmitted during their reablement period; lower than the 20% seen across other contracts.
- 68% went self-caring.
- Average referred care hours was 14.9 per week = 2,000 hours reduction.

\*Figures for pilot period February to April 2025





Following a successful one-year pilot during 2023-2024, ECL was awarded a six-year contract to provide at home short-term care to people following a spell of ill health, surgery, or an accident. The contract began in October 2024 and will run until October 2030.

The service operates seven days a week from 7am to 10pm. Working closely with local hospitals to get people home safely and provide therapy and reablement support to help them to regain their independence sooner.

Customer compliments:

"I think the service is really good it has helped me a great deal to feel better in myself. All of the carers are so nice, kind and caring, I cannot fault any one of them, they have really helped me with my confidence."

Alcia M

"The ECL service is amazing the Community Care Assistant have made me build back both my strength and courage. Thank You!"

Jonathan R

"I'd like to thank every staff member that has supported me. I cannot thank you all enough. I can get very anxious but knowing staff were coming in helped me a lot. You were all really helpful and make good cups of tea!"

Julia A



How we performed:

350 customers supported.

81.5% of customers had improved outcomes.

26,024 visits completed.

99.8% of visits completed on time.

Joyce's story

Joyce is 86 years of age, lives with her sister and niece in the family home where they grew up. An active person, before her fall she enjoyed line dancing, keep fit classes and going to bingo with her sister.

Joyce was referred to ECL following a hospital admission because of a fall. She has osteoarthritis in her left knee which causes stiffness and sometimes affects her mobility. It was this stiffness that caused her to fall.

Prior to her fall, Joyce was independent with full mobility and her goal while under ECL's care was to return this level of independence. With the support of ECL's Trusted Assessors, Community Care Assistants, a Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapy Assistant from ECL's Clinical team, she was able to get her mobility back and do things for herself again.

ECL's Occupational Therapy Assistant assessed Joyce's home and arranged for stair rails to be installed to help her with climbing the stairs. Joyce was also provided with a rollator frame to help her move around.

By the end of her reablement support Joyce could once again undertake her personal care tasks, move around her home including the stairs with the adaptations made, and prepare meals herself.

Susan Robertson, ECL Clinical Occupational Therapy Assistant said: **"Empowering Joyce to take charge of her own care, such as practicing exercises independently and preparing her own meals, was key to her regaining independence, and contributed to her overall wellbeing and independence. Tailoring the care plan to Joyce's specific needs, regular assessments and follow-up visits ensured that Joyce's progress was monitored, and necessary adjustments were made to her care plan, which helped in achieving the desired outcomes."**





Our Community Reablement Service within West Sussex has been supporting customers in their own home since 2012. Our reablement care, provided for up to six weeks, has high levels of customers leaving the service self-caring due to their increased independence.

Since the service started, the demand for reablement care has exponentially increased. During 24/25 ECL bid, via a competitive tender process, for the

Community Reablement Service and ECL has been awarded a new, significantly larger six-year contract part of West Sussex County Council's "Why Not Reablement" programme.



## Contract details:

- Runs from the beginning of April 2025 to end of March 2031.
- ECL to deliver 2,000 hours of reablement care per week from year one, increasing to 5,000 hours per week by year six.
- £60 million contract.

## How we performed:

**1,785** customers supported.

**93,980** visits completed.

**85.3%** of customers had improved outcomes.

**99.6%** of visits completed on time.

"I am very pleased that the council has taken such important steps to secure and extend reablement care support for West Sussex residents. Retaining independence to enable people to live the life they want to lead is core to our adults' social care strategy.

"There's a common misconception that reablement is only for people who have been recently discharged from hospital and is part of the reason why the service has updated its criteria to emphasise that reablement is an inclusive service and isn't diagnosis dependent. In addition, the referral process has also been streamlined to speed up people's receipt of reablement care.

"Reablement also supports our council plan's goal of keeping people safe from vulnerable situations, by building on a person's strengths."

Cllr Amanda Jupp, West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Adults Services







ECL's sensory service supports people who are partially sighted, blind, hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind to live independently. It is the first point of contact for everyone needing sensory support in Essex and provides tailored rehabilitation and one to one specialist support.

ECL's sensory service also supports businesses and organisations to be more sensory aware and inclusive through the provision of CPD accredited training, accessibility audits by a specialist sensory access auditor, and through its Sensory Action Alliance which empowers organisations to work together to create a more accessible community.

## ECL Lived Experience Volunteer shares his story with the BBC

Former customer and now, a lived experience volunteer for ECL's Sensory Support Service, Lee Mercer shared his sight loss story to help raise awareness of the importance of making eye health a priority during National Eye Health Week, 23-29 September 2024. His story caught the interest of BBC journalist Shivani Chaudhari, who published his story on the BBC News Website.



View BBC online coverage

### How we performed:

**1,841** customers referred to our sensory service, 43% more than last year.

**422** customers provided with independence enabling sensory equipment.

**1,983** people offered advice, information, guidance, and emotional support\*.

\*including signposting, and referral to ECL or another organisation.

## Lee's story

Lee lost his sight as a result of Proliferative Diabetic Retinopathy (ruptured blood vessels in the eye caused by type 1 diabetes) in 2019. He underwent multiple surgeries to restore his failing sight but unfortunately they were unsuccessful. An introduction to ECL's Sensory Service via the Eye Care Liaison Officer (ECLO) at Southend Hospital helped him to start looking forward to a more positive future.

Lee said: **"For a long time after my diagnosis I was in a sort of limbo, and I began to accept that this was it and that I might not be able to do certain things anymore. This is when I was referred to ECL's Sensory Service for an assessment which changed everything for me."**

ECL provided Lee with practical training on how to use assistive technology, navigate using a cane, and even cook a simple meal in his kitchen by using appliances safely. He was given a signature card, stuck 'bump ons' around his home, and got his first liquid level indicator.

Lee was also given help getting out and about in the form of long cane training and a dedicated sighted guide who still joins him once a week.

He said: **"Having a sighted guide means I can leave the house to exercise safely, visit new places, and travel to medical appointments. Knowing there's someone by my side means I can relax when I'm out, and the technology I've been introduced to allows me to do more of the things I love at home, like playing tabletop role-playing games online with friends."**

**Having access to the ECL Sensory Service helped me to start thinking about moving forward – it was an important step and made me feel so much more positive about the future. I regained a level of independence I'd not had for a while, and I will always be grateful to ECL."**

He is now a lived experience volunteer for ECL's Sensory Service, sharing his story and what it's like to live with a visual impairment to help others and raise awareness of the importance of making eye health a priority.





We have over 1,260 colleagues working for ECL, each striving to provide person-centred care and supporting our customers to achieve their aspirations of independence. ECL wouldn't be the success it is without such great people and our focus this year has been on giving our employees more opportunities to contribute their views and improving how we reward and recognise innovation and loyalty.

How we did this:

- Launched Your Voice employee forum
- Increased opportunities for open communication
- Investing in training to upskill colleagues in effective change management.

- Introduced quarterly long service awards.
- Launched an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) providing access to a range of resources such as counselling support, financial advice and health and wellbeing tools.

One of the key themes highlighted in our employee survey was career development. In 2024-2025 we continued with our ongoing commitment to support employee development. Our learning and development team delivered 1,033 face-to-face training seminars to 7,128 ECL attendees and supported 61 employees to undertake apprenticeships.

Our employee engagement survey results demonstrate that our employees love what they do. In 2024 engagement was 82% and the findings revealed:

91% of employees intend to be working for ECL in 12 months' time.

93% of employees have good relationships with their colleagues.

93% of employees understand how their work contributes to the success of ECL.

91% of employees feel their work contributes to making a difference to the local community.

92% of employees find their work is interesting.



"ECL provides a lot of opportunities for career progression, in the six years I've been with the company I've progressed from Community Care Assistant to Care Planner, Trusted Assessor and now I'm a Local Business Manager (LBM). They've really supported me to develop professionally and personally. Thanks to ECL's management training programme, I am now about to start my Level 5 Leadership qualification. I love that as a manager I can now support others as they begin their careers in care, helping them to achieve their goals the way my manager helped me."

Donna Hampson Local Business Manager,  
Havering and Barking and Dagenham  
Reablement Services



I love working for ECL because...



Jess' story

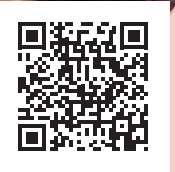
"My role is so varied. One day I may be directly supporting customers, the next, managing services or driving new projects. There's never a dull moment. I gain immense pride in managing my own service and feeling truly responsible for its success."

Jess Shorey, Day Opportunities Lead Manager.



"The career progression in ECL is phenomenal. Everyone is very supportive and they push you to achieve your full potential. I have worked for ECL Reablement for just over a year now. In that time with support and guidance from my managers and peers I have progressed from trusted Assessor to a Local Business Manager. I feel ECL cares about your personal development."

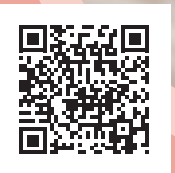
Frankie Piper, Local Business Manager, London Borough of Barking Dagenham.



Chloe's story

"Working in day services is very rewarding. I love putting a smile on my customers' faces every day and knowing that I am making a positive difference to their lives. The individuals I support take what they learn with me and use those skills at home which is great. I get huge satisfaction from helping them develop independence skills."

Chloe Gale, Learning Disabilities Support Worker.



Nick's story

"You get so much positive feedback and appreciation in this role; it just makes your day. When you can support someone to fulfil their hopes, dreams, and aspirations, help them to become a bit more independent in their daily lives, there is just no better feeling than that."

Nick Hart, Learning Disabilities Support Worker.



# Celebrating our values

Each month ECL awards a prize to the individual employees and teams that demonstrate our company values (Excellence, Teamwork, Caring, Integrity) in their day-to-day work. Employees are nominated by their colleagues, and winners are selected by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

**In the year 2024-2025 we had 22 Star of the Month and 14 Team of the Month winners.**

**Our Reablement colleagues received the most nominations, 15 of 22 of our Star of the Month Winners were from our Essex Reablement teams.**

**Our day services colleagues were the most represented in the Team of the Month nominations, five of the 14 winners were from our older people's day services and four were from learning disabilities services.**

## Our core values



Caring



Excellence



Teamwork



Integrity



### Our most notable winners were:



**Deborah Davies, Mid Essex Community Care Assistant - August 2024**

Deborah was nominated for her demonstration of caring, excellence and integrity in how she prevented a customer from falling victim to a scam. When she arrived at the customer's home for a visit the individual was on the phone, and she soon realised it was a scam caller. Deborah acted quickly to safeguard the customer and notified family to contact the bank straight away. The customer and family were very grateful for Deborah's support and how quickly she had acted on this to keep the customer safe.



**ECL Basildon (Ashleigh) Older Peoples' Day Centre - November 2024**

The team were nominated for demonstrating teamwork and caring in how they have managed during the current renovation works taking place at the centre. The customers fed back in their customer forum that they felt the team work really well together and have kept the service running smoothly during this work. Stating that they felt the team create a happy atmosphere and generate lots of joy and laughter.



**ECL Colchester (Woodlands) Learning Disabilities Day Centre - March 2025**

The team were nominated for demonstrating caring, excellence and teamwork in how they managed an issue with customer transport. UGO bus who provide ECL customer transport, was unable to collect customers on time due to an operational issue. The Woodlands team quickly created a plan to make sure customers got home safely. Working together to drive customers home in their own vehicles without hesitation and stayed past their own home time to wait with those who needed to wait for another bus, making sure they remained calm and informed the whole time.



We continue to explore innovative ways to meet unmet needs in the areas in which we operate.

The last year has seen successful pilots expand to wider Essex such as our Delegated Assessment service. Some of our projects have also come to an end such as our Ward-led Enablement programme.

## Delegated Full Care Act Assessment

Our Delegated Care Act Assessment pilot in South East Essex completed in June 2024 and following evaluation of successful outcomes it was commissioned to roll out to the whole of Essex in phases from September 2024.

The Delegated Assessment service allows appropriately trained ECL Trusted Assessors to complete statutory care assessments for ongoing home care needs for adults exiting ECL Reablement via referral to the Adult Social Care placement team in place of a social worker.

The view being that the ECL Assessor can make a more informed recommendation on the customer's individual needs having worked with them for up to six weeks. This is not only better for the person we are supporting but it eases the workload placed on the social worker.

### The service is successfully:

- Reducing waiting times for assessments enabling customers to get the care they need sooner.
- Reducing the average length of service.
- Maximising the quality of assessments.
- Improving customer experience.

Both ECL and ECC colleagues have highlighted the positive impact the project has had on improving partnership working. They feel this has positively impacted assessment outputs and wider practice.

**"I think the adults we support like the consistency with ECL completing the care assessments: Many of the adults we support are overwhelmed when they are new to social care services, so it is a positive to have a familiar service guiding them to the next stage of their care transition."**

ECL Trusted Assessor working on the Delegated Assessment project



## Cultivating relationships with third party organisations

ECL has a wide range of partnerships ranging from commercial, health and public sector alliances to local community and voluntary sector collaborations.

We only work with organisations that share our passion for enabling independence and delivering high quality services. This year we have continued to nurture our relationships with our NHS colleagues to ensure successful delivery of reablement services and pilot programmes as well as to create more employment opportunities for our Inclusive Employment customers.

Our Inclusive Employment team established new employment relationships with The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust (PAHT) and jointly hosted a ground breaking innovation day for people that had expressed an interest in applying for roles within the Trust.

The team also collaborated with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) to devise a process to make job applications for roles within the trust more accessible for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

The outcome was a Memorandum of Understanding which means that ECL Inclusive Employment candidates wishing to apply for NHS band 2 and 3 roles now have their CVs directly accepted by ESNEFT without having to use the TRAC system which has been highlighted by ECL to be a barrier to applications for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.





During the financial year 2024-2025 we embarked on several projects with Essex County Council (ECC) to improve facilities for our day service customers.

In December, we completed major works at our **Chelmsford (Highfields) Day Centre**. ECC invested over £850,000 to making improvements to the site. The work began in July, and upgrades included the installation of a new roof, solar panels, sustainable lighting, air conditioning and a new eco-friendly heating system.



Chelmsford (Highfields) renovation video

In January 2025 we completed works to transform the Older People’s Day Services at **ECL Basildon (Ashleigh)**. We invested £180,000 to improve customer areas and the environmental performance of the building. Works included new flooring, new improved lighting, installation of new personal care spaces, redecoration throughout and a new kitchen area for employees.



Basildon before and after video



**ECL Harlow refurbishment** work began in September 2024 and was completed in December 2024. The centre had a new roof installed, the car park was fully resurfaced, and a full disability friendly wet room was created.

**ECL Brentwood (Walter Boyce)** underwent renovations to create new reablement office spaces as well as new modern toilet blocks from October 2024 to April 2025.

Work also began at **ECL Colchester (Marylands)** in October 2024 to create new reablement office spaces which completed in December 2024. In March 2025 we began works to create a new 12-person capacity training suite, due to be completed in May 2025.



At **ECL Clacton (Millicents)** work was undertaken to upgrade the flooring to dementia friendly surfaces with acoustic properties to improve sound control in November 2024. In January 2025 work began to create a full disability friendly wet room and completed in March 2025.

We also successfully completed a move to a new premises for our **Clacton Community Connectors** (learning disabilities) service.

Future plans include further investment to improve ECL spaces for our teams and customers.







- Income **£43.64m.**
- Surplus for reinvestment **£406k.**
- Projected dividends to Essex County Council **£203k.**
- Balance sheet net assets are still **£20.12** million – maintaining a good Current Ratio of **4.0.**
- Investments: **£330k** in new assets during the year.

**In December 2024 we paid out the highest dividend in our history to Essex County Council of £1.868 million relating to 2023-2024 financial year.**

### Landscape:

- Revenue has fallen by 10% but this was due to contract specifics changing. Notably Essex Reablement changing to a finishers-based from an hours-based contract, which is more focused on the outcome of the individual than the volume of delivery.
- Employee cost as a percentage of revenue have increased by 10% due to National Living Wage increases. ECL prides itself on paying above National Living Wage in recognition of the skilled work our colleagues deliver. Despite this increase, we still continue our commitment to do this.
- Interest rates fell – leading to £108k reduction in interest income.
- New reserve strategy for future long-term investment was created in line with our five-year business strategy.



## Customer feedback



### ECL Basildon (Ashleigh) Older Peoples' Day Centre

What a wonderful place for older people to go. It's been a godsend for my mum who has recently been widowed and moved to a new area. The team there are absolutely amazing caring supportive and genuine. She loves going to the Ashleigh Centre and the change in her is truly noticeable, she is uplifted happy and more chatty. Thank you Ashleigh Older People Centre.

### ECL Colchester (Woodlands) Learning Disabilities Day Centre

I visited Woodlands in Colchester recently. I would like to feedback how impressed I was with all I saw. The manager, Taleena showed us around and made us most welcome. It had such a warm, inclusive and happy atmosphere. The staff have developed wonderful relationships with all the customers, I really enjoyed the visit and so did my companions with a view to attending in the near future.

### Fantastic Inclusive Employment

The Inclusive Employment support my son received from ECL has been a success. His employment consultant Mark, is supportive, friendly and understanding of my son's needs. With the help of the ECL team and Mark's optimism and encouragement my son has his ideal job, which he never thought he would. They have given him a chance to succeed in life.





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