



Community Leader (Director)

L'Arche London



Together

With and without learning disability



L'ARCHE
In the UK

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the role of Community Leader (Director) for our L'Arche Community based in West Norwood, London.

We are looking for someone with the leadership gifts, values and ambition to enable both:

- brilliant, person-centred support and housing for adults with learning disabilities, and
- beautiful community where people with and without learning disabilities share lives, homes, friendships and spiritual journeys together.

That's our 50-year joyful rebellion. Against a world that is too often unfair and unkind to people with disabilities. Against social care that leaves people lonely or institutionalised. Against modern life that's too disconnected and distracted for all of us.

If this lights a spark in you, please read on, and get in touch.

The closing date for applications is 29 September 2024. If you would like to talk before then to me as hiring manager, or to the current job holder - to ask questions or get a feel for what being a L'Arche Community Leader is like - then please email me on john.casson@larche.org.uk.

With best wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Casson".

John Casson CMG
National Leader/CEO, L'Arche in the UK

Introducing L'Arche

INTRODUCTION

L'Arche is a worldwide movement of people with and without learning disabilities building community together. We aim to be a beacon for our society - of what social care can be, what life with learning disabilities can be, and what a more human society can be.

L'Arche in the UK is a registered charity and a regulated provider of care and support. Our 11 Communities in England, Scotland and Wales offer a varied mix of adult supported living, registered care, and day services.



OUR VISION

L'Arche is here to show that everyone belongs.

We create Communities where people with and without learning disabilities live, share, and grow together.

We build relationships with people in our neighbourhoods.

We work towards a world where people with learning disabilities are included and valued.

OUR VALUES

With and without learning disabilities, we try to:

- be welcoming and kind
- be committed to each other
- bring out the best in each other
- celebrate being different and diverse
- encourage one another's spirituality.

Who We Are

L'ARCHE INTERNATIONAL'S WORLDWIDE MISSION

- To make known the gifts of people with learning disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships.
- To foster a community environment that reflects the changing needs of our members and our core values.
- To engage in diverse cultures, working together towards a more human society.

In L'Arche, we celebrate people with learning disabilities, and build Communities with them rather than for them. We aim to combine outstanding care with a distinctive commitment to intentional community, mutuality and the whole person. A feature of our model is that in some L'Arche houses a small number of assistants live in, sharing home life with people with disabilities. We care about everyone's emotional and inner life, building spaces of vibrant friendship, opportunity, spirituality and community life.

People with learning disabilities are integral to everything we do - not just as service users but as members, leaders, activists, colleagues, and friends. Our mission is to discover and share the unique gifts of people with learning disabilities in the world.

We offer our employees an invitation to find in L'Arche, as well as a great place to work, a place to belong, to find friendship and meaning, and to grow through committed, two-way relationships with people with disabilities.

L'Arche was founded on Christian principles. These principles mean L'Arche stands for the radical inclusion of those who are excluded, and for the right of every person to flourish in their spirituality, whatever their background. We welcome people of all faiths and no faith, including in senior leadership roles - like this one.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT...

<https://www.larche.org.uk/our-unique-approach>



<youtu.be/RSwdYB-czf4>
'We Are L'Arche' video



<https://www.larche.org.uk/impact-report-2023>
2023 Impact Report and Annual Report



About L'Arche London

L'Arche London is an intentional and inclusive community of more than 100 people, with and without learning disabilities. One of the flagship L'Arche UK communities, we're part of a federation that includes over 150 communities across 37 countries and 6 continents.

Our community includes over 30 people with learning disabilities, with lots of different support needs, who we support at home and in our workshops. Alongside them are employed assistants, volunteers, friends and neighbours, all integral in fostering a warm and inclusive atmosphere. Our team of employed assistants leads in providing support and care.

We have lots of diversity and lots of opinions. We love people, we love our busy, vibrant city, and we welcome everyone to build a community that values each individual and embraces the beauty of differences. Since 1977, our mission has been to create an environment where diversity is celebrated, creativity cherished, and independence nurtured. Together, we want a more inclusive, compassionate world.

Housing, Supported Living Services, and Residential Care

We currently provide support services to 25 people living alone or in small shared houses. Many of our homes have communal spaces that allow for shared meals and activities. One of our houses is set up to support long-term assistants in L'Arche, enabling them to stay connected to the community and contribute to communal living.

Another larger shared house, rated "good" by CQC, is owned by Lambeth Council and home to people with more complex disabilities.

We own the majority of our properties, with just one other house owned by a housing association - with whom we work in partnership. We have one block of flats currently used as temporary accommodation for the arrival of new assistants and as a space to welcome visitors wishing to stay for a few days.

Day Opportunities

Our day services are based in the Craft Workshop and in the beautiful garden that surrounds Gothic Lodge. Our craft workshop, situated at the bottom of our community offices, serves as a community hub, with space for community coffee mornings and other events, and a place to display and sell our wonderful products made in the workshop. Both workshops welcome over 30 people daily to participate in activities such as gardening, arts and crafts, life-skills development, and health and well-being sessions.

Our Community is very creative - rich with talented artists, skilled gardeners, and passionate actors and we love to showcase our work. We aim to create as many spaces as possible where every community member can grow and thrive. We also engage with our neighbours and local community groups, joining local festivals and exhibitions, and putting our unique stamp on this vibrant area of London. One of our greatest gifts to the local community is our fantastic drama and performance group, who regularly devise and perform plays in local theatres and churches.

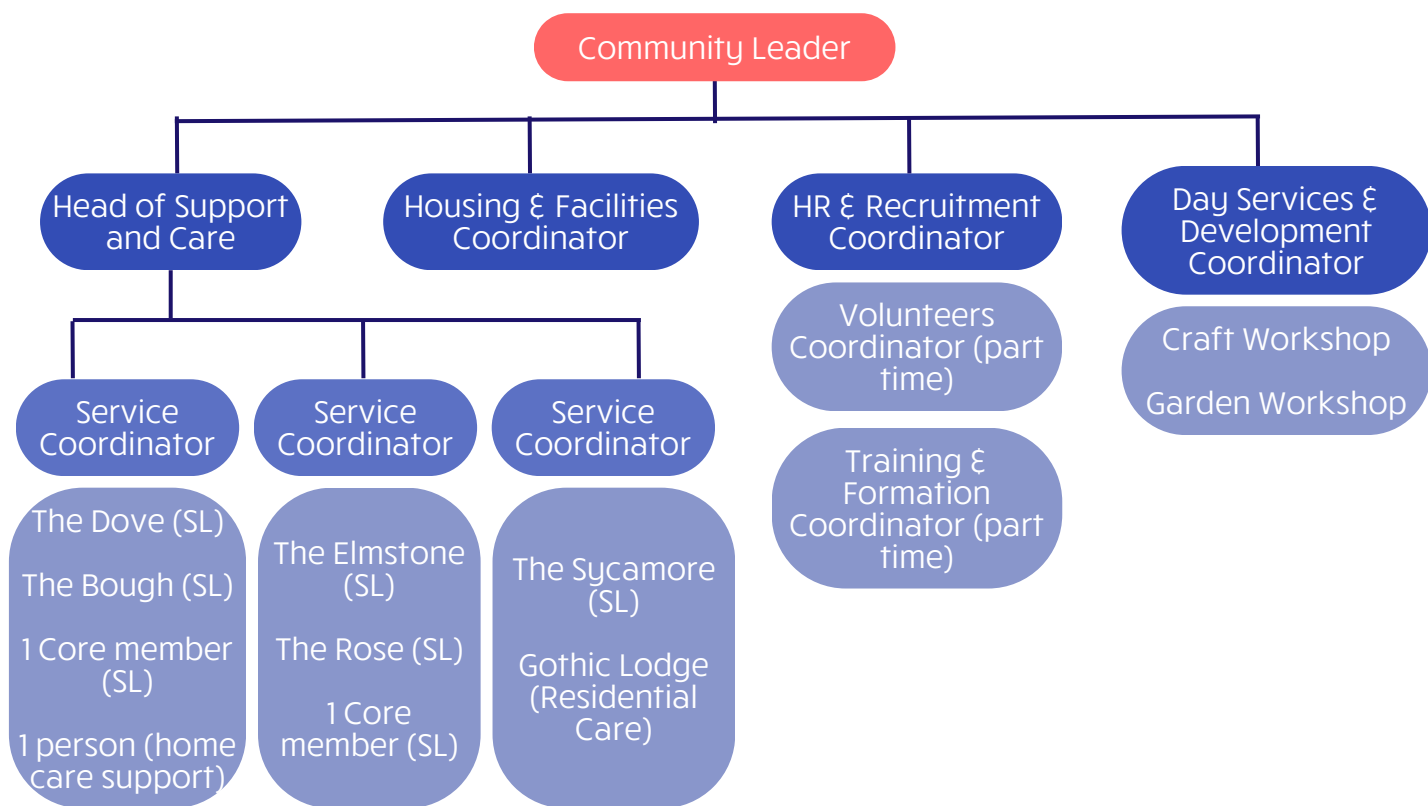
Location: West Norwood

We are in West Norwood, a vibrant, diverse - and sometimes divided - neighbourhood in South London. The area boasts independent cafes, galleries, and a cinema. There is easy access to central London, half an hour away by bus or train.

L'Arche London is a resilient and strong community, used to adapting to constant change and proud to call West Norwood home.



Our L'Arche London Team



L'ARCHE ACROSS THE UK IS A SINGLE NATIONAL CHARITY AND COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE, WITH A SINGLE SET OF ACCOUNTS, A NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM.

The Community Leader (Director) is supervised by a National or Regional I Leader who is part of the L'Arche UK National Leadership Team.

Key functions provided by L'Arche nationally include:

1. Finance - invoicing, payments, producing management accounts, and running payroll
2. HR - including visas and specialist HR advice
3. Care, Support and Housing - quality assurance, oversight and policy setting.
4. Learning and Development - including assistant and leader induction
5. Fundraising and communications.



Role Summary

Job title:	Community Leader (Director)
Location:	L'Arche London Community Office, West Norwood, SE27 Some travel and overnight stays will be required within the UK
Hours:	35.7 hours per week
Reports to:	L'Arche UK National Leader / CEO (as interim Regional Leader)

ARE YOU A LEADER WHO CAN:

- Inspire and lead a diverse and talented community of over 100 individuals with and without learning disabilities - people we support, employees, volunteers, long-term friends and members.
- Oversee and develop £2.5 million worth of registered care, supported living, and day services, ensuring compliance with CQC requirements, alignment with the L'Arche vision and values, and maintaining financial sustainability.
- Lead a team of 70 employees through strategic direction, effective processes and service delivery, and emotionally intelligent, collaborative, forward-thinking people management.
- Represent L'Arche London externally in fundraising efforts, outreach to build local partnerships, and participation in L'Arche UK leadership and governance forums.
- Embody and advocate for the L'Arche ethos of cultivating deep, long-term, and mutually transformative relationships between individuals with and without learning disabilities.

The L'Arche London Community includes nine supported living services, one registered care home, and two day workshops, serving 34 individuals—all located within a mile of West Norwood Station.

L'Arche London strives to be an inclusive community that celebrates spirituality and friendship in all its diversity. Inspired by our Christian roots, we welcome people of all faiths and none.

The ideal candidate will have significant leadership experience in social care, a passion for the values of L'Arche, and a commitment to the community model we are building.



Community Leader Priorities

ABOUT THIS ROLE

The Community Leader (Director) is responsible for ensuring that the Community is living the mission of L'Arche, by providing excellent and financially sustainable care and support services, support for spirituality, and engaging with our neighbours and the wider community around us.

In your first year, you will:

- Get to know the people, mission, services, and business model of L'Arche London, as well as the daily realities, core traditions, and practices of the Community.
- Develop a 5-Year Strategic Vision for L'Arche London, co-created, renewing confidence in our mission and identity, and innovating for opportunities such as expanding day service workshops. Adapt to local needs for people with learning disabilities.
- Develop ways to amplify the voice and power of our members with learning disabilities, so their choices, hopes, and dreams are represented locally and nationally. Harness the potential and influence of key community groups, such as the Community Council and Listening Groups.
- Shape a new Community wide focus on employee recruitment, retention, belonging and well-being: Address our recruitment and retention challenges by overseeing new, mission-led approaches for live-ins to thrive in the community, and reviewing recruitment and retention strategies, with more emphasis on recruiting locally.
- Co-Design, a comprehensive Housing Strategy, building our recent housing review into a strategic vision, opening new opportunities aligned with the review's objectives.
- Strengthen employee and member wellbeing and culture, aligned with the vision and values of L'Arche. Oversee ongoing performance and flourishing of L'Arche London's coordinating team and assistants. Expand the scope of Community Listening Circle meetings and other spaces for reflection. With local support groups create an engagement and inclusion improvement plan.
- Oversee our financial performance and sustainability, with vigilant financial oversight, responding to local authority procurement opportunities, pursuing uplift requests for housing and care support, and identify growth opportunities and efficiencies.



Responsibilities

Key Responsibilities

- Lead a community that responds to the needs, choices and context of our members, and is faithful to the L'Arche UK Vision and Values, to the L'Arche International Identity and Mission statement, and to a co-created Community Mandate and plan.
- Maintain and enhance high-quality, person-centred care, support, and housing for people with learning disabilities, both at home and in our day services. Collaborate with the Registered Manager, L'Arche UK Care Quality team, London leaders, external partners, individual circles of support, and local partners.
- Ensure the Community's financial sustainability through robust financial planning and management. This includes setting budgets and controlling spending, maximising occupancy in our housing, negotiating care contracts, growing our day services and spotting fundraising opportunities.
- Foster a culture that maximises the voice and power for people with learning disabilities, and builds listening and collaboration between Community members with and without learning disabilities (including through an active Community Support Group, Community Council, Community Gatherings, listening circles, and other forums).
- Lead and manage a diverse, committed, and engaged leadership team to achieve objectives, set a positive culture, and support the personal and professional growth of our leaders.
- Cultivate an open, creative, and inclusive spiritual life, inviting everyone in the Community to deepen their collective growth. Support and encourage events that build community belonging.
- Model, advocate for, and embrace the L'Arche ethos of deep, long-term, and mutually transforming relationships between people with and without learning disabilities.
- Be a visible representative of L'Arche locally, developing relationships with community houses, surrounding neighbourhoods, local authorities, professional organisations, schools, faith communities, and L'Arche worldwide.
- Contribute to the national work programmes of L'Arche UK, and collaborate with Community Leaders of other L'Arche Communities, to share skills, best practice and resources.



Person Specification

Experience and knowledge

Essential

- Senior leadership experience in support to adults with learning disabilities (or transferable skills and experience in a closely-related field).
- Experience leading and managing an organisation to deliver results, and to change in response to risks and opportunities.
- Experience leading and developing diverse teams to flourish, individually and together.
- Good financial planning skills and experience successfully managing a substantial budget.
- Evidence of the ability to think strategically, and work collaboratively to deliver strategy and implement plans.

Desirable

- Personal experience of relationships with adults with learning disabilities – whether providing support, co-creation, or building meaningful personal relationships.
- Experience of negotiating with local authority commissioners, other funding bodies, and housing providers.
- Experience ensuring compliance and accountability to care regulators.
- Experience of intentional communities, or places where very diverse people are in voluntary relationship together.
- Knowledge of introducing and using IT systems in social care or equivalent settings.

Skills, attitudes, and values

- Passionate about person-centred support, authentic relationships, and full opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Enthusiastic about the values, and mission of L'Arche, with the wisdom to combine our different needs, voices and priorities into an inclusive, dynamic, and nurturing community.
- Collaborative and resilient leader, skilled in setting culture and direction, coaching people, addressing under-performance, and adapting to various people and styles.
- Emotionally intelligent, with compassion, self-awareness, courage, integrity, and humility and a readiness to be present and visible to people across the Community.
- A good listener, able to reflect and lead others in reflective practice.
- Receptive to mentorship and seeking help.
- Organised and capable of prioritising, delegating, and working autonomously.
- Able to listen to the whole community, and foster free speech, innovation, creativity, collaboration and consensus.
- Effective communicator, adept at adapting to diverse groups and individuals, including those with learning disabilities.
- Committed to building a diverse community that includes people of different ages, abilities, cultures, nationalities, sexualities, faith perspectives, and life experiences.
- Dedicated to ongoing professional and personal development, with a commitment to acquiring new knowledge and skills relevant to the role.
- Knows how to have fun.

Desirable

- Comfortable working with MS Office including Excel, Canva, and IT and data security.
- Critical thinking, written and verbal communication, and numeracy skills demonstrated in educational qualifications or professional experience.
- Able to articulate your own story and practices of spirituality, faith, or personal change.



Terms and Next Steps

Salary:	£57,000 - £60,000 (including London weighting)
Annual leave:	33 days including bank holidays
Pension:	A Group Personal Pension Plan
Professional Development:	A Leaders' Learning and Development fund is available.
Location:	Based in our office in West Norwood, SE27 9JU

TO APPLY FOR THIS ROLE:



Apply and submit your CV by scanning the QR code above or clicking the link below:
<https://larches.livevacancies.co.uk/#/applicant/80>

CLOSING DATE

Closing date for applications is 29 September 2024

INTERVIEWS

First round interviews are expected to take place between 10 and 16 October.

Appointment is subject to satisfactory references and DBS check.



We are committed to diversity

L'Arche is part of the global movement for inclusion and diversity.

We actively encourage individuals from diverse backgrounds and with unique personal stories to join us. If there are areas in the job description where you feel less experienced, please don't let that deter you. We are committed to supporting you in learning new skills and accessing the necessary training.

We are also prepared to make adjustments to ensure the job is a good fit for the right person.

We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds protected by the Equality Act. We particularly encourage candidates who are disabled or from Black, Asian, or minority ethnic backgrounds, as these groups are currently underrepresented in L'Arche management roles.

L'Arche UK is committed to making reasonable adjustments to the application process for those with disabilities or long-term health conditions, or if you need different or additional accommodations for an interview.

Please feel free to contact us at info@larche.org.uk for a conversation about this opportunity.

L'Arche is committed to inclusive working practices, so during the application process we commit to:

- Pay for childcare while you are at any in-person interviews.
- Pay your travel costs to and from interviews.
- Make any reasonable adjustments for the interview process.

