



**Could you be our next  
Community Leader for  
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 for our L'Arche London Community based in West Norwood, South East London.

Our Communities are places where people with and without learning disabilities live, share and grow together. Our London Community was founded nearly 50 years ago and is made up of over 100 members - including people we support, employees, volunteers, long-term friends and members.

We are looking for someone with the leadership gifts, values and ambition to enable us to achieve our 2030 Strategy aims of:

- 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.
- effective organisation

This is a very varied role which includes both operational management and visible leadership. The Community Leader brings people together, leading Celebrations, spiritual spaces, role modelling the values of L'Arche and building a culture which empowers teams to flourish, as well as co-producing plans to develop the Community and the services which we provide. The Community Leader is also responsible for managing compliance, budgets, embedding systems, organisational processes and policies in the London Community.

Alongside other Community Leaders across the UK and members of the National Team, you will also contribute to the development and delivery of projects focusing on: Finances, People, Care and Housing, to meet our ambitious 2030 Strategy.

But being Community Leader is more than just a job and we are looking for someone who wants to be part of a movement of hope and joy. In L'Arche, you will be part of changing the world, and you could be profoundly changed too.

The closing date for applications is 16th April 2026, at 12pm. If you would like to talk to us before then, to ask questions or get a feel for what being a L'Arche Community Leader is like - then please email [dawn.dacosta@larche.org.uk](mailto:dawn.dacosta@larche.org.uk)

With best wishes,



Laura Harper  
National Leader/CEO, L'Arche in the UK



Dawn Dacosta  
Director of Care and Communities

# Introducing L'Arche

## INTRODUCTION

L'Arche is a worldwide movement of people with and without learning disabilities building community together. We have an international Charter and Mission and Identify Statement which sets out who we are:

### Charter

[bit.ly/larche\\_charter\\_EN](https://bit.ly/larche_charter_EN)



### Mission and Identity

[bit.ly/mission\\_and\\_identity](https://bit.ly/mission_and_identity)



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. We have developed a Vision and Values statement for the UK:



## 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.

# Our Approach

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.

People with learning disabilities are integral to everything we do – not just as service users but as members, leaders, activists, colleagues, and friends. 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 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.

We care about everyone's emotional and inner life, building spaces of vibrant friendship, opportunity, spirituality and community life.

'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 leadership roles - like this one. However, we are looking for a leader who is open to learning more about others spirituality and the traditions of L'Arche.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT...

[www.larche.org.uk/our-unique-approach](http://www.larche.org.uk/our-unique-approach)



[youtu.be/RSwdYB-czf4](https://youtu.be/RSwdYB-czf4)  
'We Are L'Arche' video



<https://bit.ly/3ZaJjFZ>  
L'Arche Annual Report 2024



**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 is supervised by the Director of Care and Communities who is part of the L'Arche UK National Leadership Team.

Whilst there are roles within the Community that work in these areas, there is also national support for:

1. Finance - invoicing, payments, producing management accounts, and running payroll
2. People and Culture- including visas and specialist HR advice, payroll, learning and development
3. Care, Support and Housing - quality assurance, oversight and policy setting.
4. Fundraising and communications - support with projects and initiatives to build our profile and income



# 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 24 people living alone or in shared houses. Many of our homes have communal spaces that allow for shared meals and activities.

We own and manage some of the properties in the London Community, and also work in partnership with housing association landlords.

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

## **Day Opportunities**

Our day services are based in the Craft Workshop and in the beautiful garden that is attached to our Residential Care Home. 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, and diverse 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.



# Role Summary

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<b>Job title:</b>	Community Leader
<b>Location:</b>	L'Arche London Community, West Norwood, SE27 Some travel and overnight stays will be required within the UK
<b>Hours:</b>	37.5 hours per week (including some evening and weekend working, and regular on-call)
<b>Reports to:</b>	L'Arche UK Director of Care and Communities

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## ARE YOU A LEADER WHO CAN:

- Inspire, lead and empower a diverse and talented community of over 100 individuals with and without learning disabilities in our Community
- Provide visible leadership to a team of over 70 employees, shaping local priorities and empowering and encouraging them by role modelling collaboration and flexibility.
- Embrace and engage in Community life, acting as a role model for L'Arche's values and culture, taking responsibility for shaping the culture in the London Community.
- Create and lead spaces for groups to come together for reflection, spirituality and celebration.
- Embody and advocate for the L'Arche ethos of cultivating deep, long-term friendships between individuals with and without learning disabilities.
- Oversee and develop £2.5 million worth of registered care, supported living, and day services, ensuring compliance with CQC requirements, and maintaining financial sustainability. Develop local strategy and action plans, and embed effective processes and organisational policies.
- Communicate openly, clearly, consistently and creatively. Be vulnerable, authentic and open to building relationships with all people within the Community. Develop a culture where feedback is welcomed and used for continuous improvement.
- Represent L'Arche London externally in fundraising efforts, outreach to build local partnerships, and participation in L'Arche UK leadership and governance forums.

The L'Arche London Community includes nine supported living services, one registered care home, and two day workshops- supporting over 30 people—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, or a closely related field, and a passion for the values of L'Arche, and a commitment to the Community we are building.



# Community Leader Priorities

## ABOUT THIS ROLE

The Community Leader is responsible for ensuring that the Community is living the mission of L'Arche, by providing excellent and 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.
- Co-produce a 5-Year Vision and plan for L'Arche London based on our 2030 Strategy, working with Community members, to renew confidence in our mission and identity, and to create opportunities for innovation and growth.
- 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 belonging and inclusion, working alongside the coordinating team to build a culture that aligns with L'Arche values, and supports employee recruitment and retention.
- 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.
- Engaging with local opportunities for fundraising and partnership working which helps enable our unique mission.



# 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 in partnership with the Registered Manager, the Team in London, National Leadership Team, individual circles of support, and external 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 groups, 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. Empower and encourage our teams to innovate and be receptive to change and continuous improvement
- Cultivate an open, creative, and inclusive spiritual life, inviting everyone in the Community to deepen their connections.
- Model, advocate for, and embrace the L'Arche ethos of deep, long-term, and mutually transforming relationships between people with and without learning disabilities. Plan and lead a regular calendar of events that build community belonging and help keep people connected.
- Contribute to the national work programmes of L'Arche UK, as part of the National Council, collaborating with Community Leaders of other L'Arche Communities, to share skills, best practice and resources.
- Be a visible representative of L'Arche locally in the wider community, with stakeholders like local authorities, professional organisations, schools, faith communities, and L'Arche world wide.



# 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 or large teams to deliver results, maintain compliance and quality, and to respond 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 develop and implement community plans.
- Experience of living or working alongside people with learning disabilities and/or autistic individuals

### Desirable

- Experience of negotiating with local authority commissioners, other funding bodies, and housing providers and advocating for the best possible outcomes for individuals.
- 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
- Management and leadership qualification.

## Skills, attitudes, and values

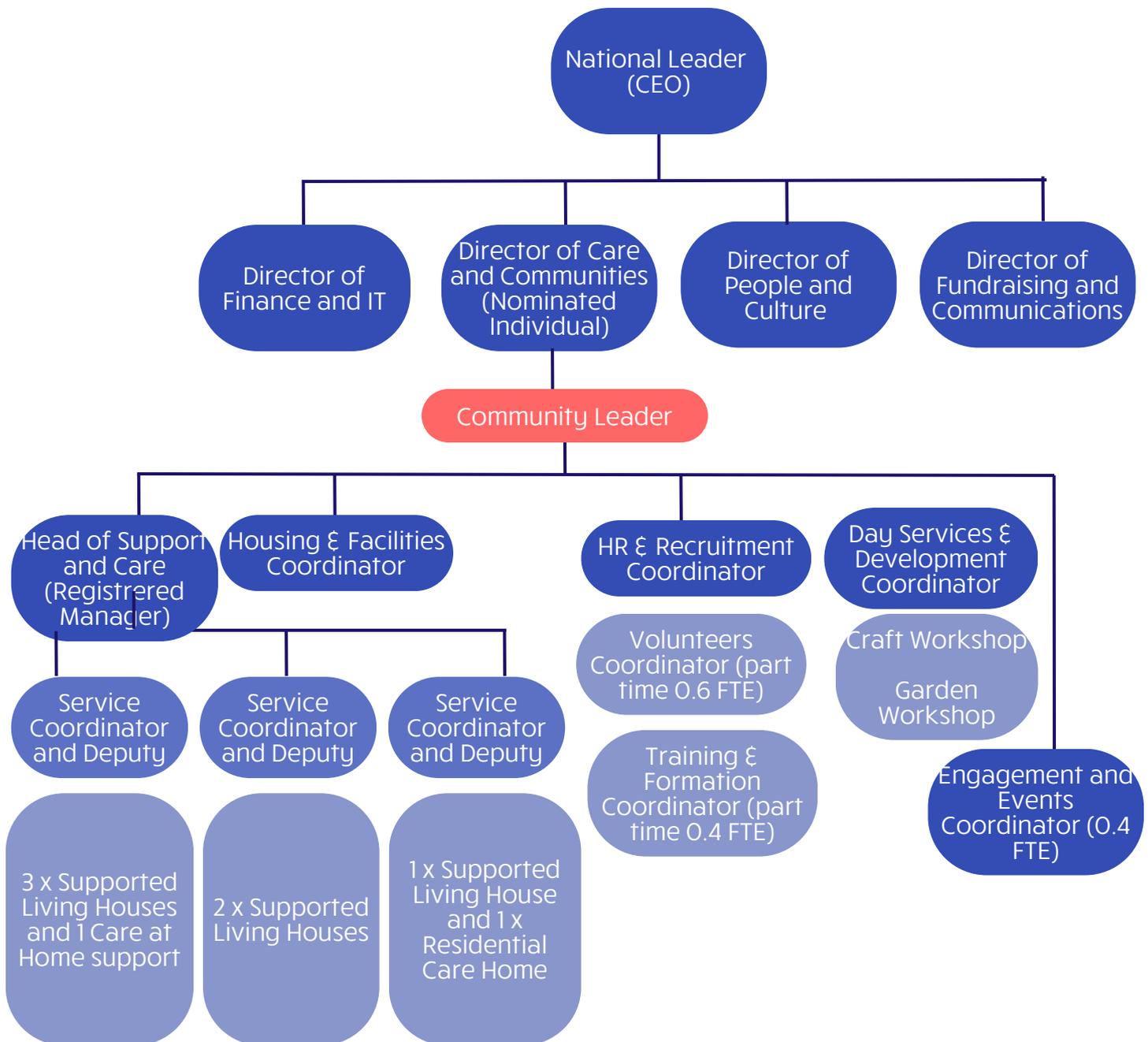
- Passionate about person-centred support, authentic relationships, and opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Enthusiastic about the values, and mission of L'Arche, and interested in the history and traditions of L'Arche and specifically the London Community.
- Openness and curiosity about different perspectives of spirituality.
- Collaborative and resilient leader, skilled in setting culture and direction, coaching people, addressing under-performance where required, and celebrating and appreciating successes.
- Organised and capable of forward planning, prioritising, delegating, and working autonomously.
- Emotionally intelligent, compassionate, curious, courageous and humble, with a readiness to be present and visible to people across the Community and role model L'Arche Values.
- A confident communicator and good listener who can adapt their style to diverse groups and situations, and is committed to communicating effectively with people with learning disabilities in their preferred way.
- Able to create a culture where feedback is welcomed and used for continuous improvement, and where people are empowered to be creative and innovate in their roles.
- Committed to reflective practice and confidence in leading spaces for reflection and sharing learning.
- 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, receiving mentorship and seeking help where needed.
- Knows how to have fun.

### Desirable

- Comfortable working with MS Office including Word, 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.



# Structure



To find out more about who is who in L'Arche UK click here:

<https://www.larche.org.uk/Listing/Category/larche-uk-leadership>

# Terms and Next Steps

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<b>Salary:</b>	£55,000 (including London weighting)
<b>Annual leave:</b>	33 days including bank holidays
<b>Pension:</b>	A Group Personal Pension Plan
<b>Professional Development:</b>	A Leaders' Learning and Development fund is available.
<b>Location:</b>	Based in our office in West Norwood, SE27 9JU

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## 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/200>

## CLOSING DATE

Closing date for applications is 16th April at midday

## INTERVIEWS

First round interviews (and test) are expected to take place on either 22nd or 23rd April 2026, online via Teams.

Second round interviews will take place on 30th April 2026 and will take place within the Community 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](mailto: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.



# Our Benefits

As well as joining a friendly Community, where you will be well supervised and supported, and benefit from L'Arche's mentorship programme, these are some other benefits you get by working for us:

- Joining shared meals since cooking and having a meal together is what we are all about
- Achieve professional qualifications while benefiting from exceptional training and development opportunities
- Enhanced Maternity, Adoption/Surrogacy, Paternity Pay (depending on length of service, details available on request)
- Enhanced sick pay
- Interest free loans and salary advances available
- Free eye tests and a contribution towards the cost of glasses if you need them for work
- Free DBS / PVG checks
- Free SSSC registration
- Access to purchase a Blue Light Card
- Professional membership fees paid if they are directly relevant to your role
- Free Employee Assistance Programme available to everyone
- Up to 5 days paid compassionate leave
- Up to 6 days paid (pro rata) for time off for emergency dependents leave
- Carer and Childminder costs available in some circumstances to facilitate attendance at residential meetings
- Paid mileage costs at HMRC rate
- Working from Home Allowance for those in office-based roles but for whom no office is provided
- Specialist bereavement counselling for employees and their family members
- Life Assurance
- Access to the Bike to Work scheme

