



We're looking for...

Chair of Trustees (voluntary)

L'Arche is looking for a new Chair
for the Board of trustees, overseeing
our governance, finance and mission in the UK



L'Arche is looking for a new Chair of Trustees

Welcome

Do you believe that every person has a right to a full life, with friendship, belonging and opportunities to contribute their gifts?

Could you offer your skills, experience and wisdom to support a movement of people with and without learning disabilities for to build community together?

If so, you could make a profound contribution as the next Chair of the Board of Trustees of L'Arche in the UK.

This is a pivotal time for L'Arche. After more than 50 years in the UK, we are delivering our 2030 Strategy: beautiful community, brilliant care and an effective organisation. We want to grow our impact and be a beacon of hope in the world.

We are looking for a Chair who brings strategic clarity, sound judgement and strong relational leadership. You will help the Board provide wise, values-led governance, build a constructive partnership with the National Leader and represent L'Arche to our partners and the wider public.

Giving your skills to L'Arche could be a gift for you too. People often come to L'Arche to change the world and find that they are changed through sharing friendship, community and life together.

If this speaks to you, we would love to hear from you.



Sue Williams

Sue Williams and Anne Winter

Vice Chair and Board People Lead



Anne Winter

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 UK annual turnover is about £22m. Some 1400 people across the UK belong to a L'Arche Community, including about 300 people with learning disabilities and more than 700 employees and volunteers.



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'S WORLDWIDE MISSION

L'Arche is a movement of over 150 Communities, across 37 countries, where people with and without learning disabilities share life. In these diverse contexts and cultures, we work for a world where everyone belongs, and the contributions of people with learning disabilities are held up and celebrated. The International Federation of L'Arche Communities is led by the International Leadership Team, of which the UK National Leader is a member.

L'ARCHE COMMUNITIES IN THE UK

L'Arche Communities bring together people with and without learning disabilities to live and work alongside each other as equal partners in our mission. We focus on building mutual relationships and going beyond traditional care models to celebrate the value of every individual.

That might mean:

- following Rory on his dream of dancing to Take That on the London stage
- trekking across the country for a weekend of fun, music and celebration at L'Arche's annual Hopefest
- inviting a famous politician and podcaster for a cuppa tea and a Jammy Dodger
- bringing a fairy tale to life by becoming a cat, a rooster or a donkey

Our 11 UK Communities are each made up of people with and without disabilities sharing life in a local neighbourhood within a particular town or city.

Each Community aims to combine outstanding care and support with a distinctive commitment to intentional community. We care about everyone's emotional and inner life, building spaces of vibrant friendship, opportunity, spirituality and fun. One feature of our model is that some L'Arche households include a small number of live-in assistants, who share home life with those they support.

We offer our employees not only a great place to work, but an invitation to find friendship and meaning, to grow in relationship with people with disabilities.

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

L'Arche works hard to raise funds and community support, and enable our supporters, volunteers and friends to get involved in community life as well.

L'Arche was first founded on Christian principles. These principles mean we stand for radical inclusion, 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. We actively encourage people in L'Arche to nurture and share their spiritual life. And we intentionally draw on the diverse faith and spirituality traditions of our members, to create a spiritually rich community life for everyone.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT...

bit.ly/larche_approach

Includes 2-minute "We are L'Arche" video

bit.ly/larche_impact

includes 5-minute video telling our 50-year story

bit.ly/larche_impact25

2024/5 Impact Report and Annual Report

bit.ly/larche_charterEN

Our charter expresses all that unites us in our great global diversity.

L'Arche 2030 Strategy

Our ambition for 2030 is to be:

- a place of brilliant, consistent care and beautiful, local Community
- as committed as ever to mutuality, to spirituality, and to fun and friendship
- a brighter beacon of voice and power, wellbeing, and varied opportunities for people with learning disabilities
- a great place to work, belong and grow
- better resourced with the money, and people we need
- growing again - with more members, more houses and more impact
- more connected to L'Arche across the UK and around the world.

...while facing these long-term challenges:

- a continuing financial squeeze on our sector, whilst seeking to strengthen our reserves.
- time and compliance pressures on leaders and assistants
- L'Arche systems that can be complicated, unclear or inconsistent
- unfairness for people with learning disabilities and others who draw on social care in society.

To do this we need to be one effective organisation, enabling Community and Care through:

- clear responsibilities and accountability
- consistent and simple processes
- reliable, timely and transparent information and data
- specialised central support and ownership for our vital organisational needs
- making the most of our essential resources, money, people and houses.



L'Arche National Board

THE TRUSTEES

11 Trustees make up the L'Arche National Board under our registration with the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Scottish Charity Regulator.

These 11 Board Members are also Directors of the UK registered company L'Arche, and part of a group of about 50 voting members of the company which also includes representatives with and without learning disabilities from across L'Arche Communities.

The National Board plays a key role in ensuring the vision and direction and sustainability of L'Arche in the UK. It is responsible to the Charity Commission, to the members of L'Arche UK and to the L'Arche International Federation for our governance, mission and identity. The Board holds accountable the National Leader (CEO), the National Leadership Team and local Community Leaders.

Individual Board members are identified to lead on: finance; safeguarding; whistleblowing; people; care regulation.

SPIRITUALITY IN L'ARCHE

L'Arche was first 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 such as this.

To find out more about spirituality in L'Arche have a look at what people said in our Big Conversation on Spirituality:

bit.ly/larche_conversations

TIME COMMITMENT

The Board typically meets five times a year, including the AGM. Some Trustees are also on Subcommittees which meet around the Board cycle. Some of the meetings are on video call, and others are in person. Routine meetings are on a weekday afternoon currently.

There are two whole day meetings: An annual Board Strategy Day, and a combined meeting with the National Speaking Council (made up of members with learning disabilities).

Meetings for the next year are:

- 3 December 2026, Time with the National Speaking Council and Board meeting, Crewe;
- 17 March 2027 Board meeting;
- 18 March 2027 AGM;
- 16 June 2027 Board meeting;
- 29 September 2027 Board meeting;
- 24 or 25 November 2027 (tbc) Board meeting;

As a Board member you are also invited to share in the life of our Communities, by participating in events throughout the year. An average time commitment of 0.75 days a week is anticipated.

REMUNERATION

Trustees are not remunerated, but we reimburse reasonable travel, accommodation and other expenses.

TERMS OF OFFICE

Trustees are appointed for a four year term of office, which can be renewed twice, up to a maximum term of service of twelve years.

ELIGIBILITY

Trustees must be at least 16 years of age, and should not have been previously disqualified under the Charities Act.

DUTIES

Read more about the 6 main duties of Charity Trustees here:

bit.ly/gov_trustees



Trustee Role Description

Job title:	Chair of Trustees
Hours:	An average of 0.75 day a week time commitment is anticipated.
Salary:	This role is not remunerated, but reasonable expenses are paid.
Location:	Meetings are mostly on Zoom or in London. Being close to one of our 11 UK Communities is an advantage but not essential.

L'Arche Board is made up of 11 Trustees who are jointly responsible for:

- ensuring that L'Arche in the UK has a clear vision, mission, and strategy, and is focused on achieving them;
- the performance of the Charity and its corporate behaviour;
- ensuring that L'Arche UK Charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements;
- being a guardian of the Charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security and proper use;
- ensuring that the Charity fulfils its purpose and aims;
- using their specific skills, knowledge, and professional and lived experience in support of L'Arche;
- informing yourself of the key responsibilities, expectations, and best practice for Charity Trustees as set out by the Charity Commission and others, and stay up to date with best practice in the sector;

As chair, you will bring strategic clarity to the work of the National Board and will demonstrate a clear understanding of the distinction between non-executive and executive roles. You will also bring strong relational ability and emotional intelligence to the role, enabling you to draw the best out of the National Board members, as well as developing a good rapport with the National Leader. You will be an ambassador for L'Arche in the public arena, with the ability to represent and raise the profile of L'Arche amongst funders, opinion-leaders and a wide range of partners.

TIME COMMITMENT

Candidates will need to demonstrate the ability to commit sufficient time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours.

- Preparing for and chairing National Board meetings and the AGM;
- Monthly meetings with the National Leader;
- Attending part of the National Speaking Council meeting once a year - to hear from core members directly - 1 day a year;
- Attending part of an annual meeting with the wider senior leadership of L'Arche UK - 1 day a year;
- Attending International meetings of the Federation - usually 1 meeting of 4 days approximately every 2 years;
- Representing L'Arche UK at various events and meetings with key stakeholders;
- Visits to L'Arche communities to experience the living out of the vision and mission of L'Arche today.



Chair Responsibilities

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- In partnership with the National Leader, provide ambitious and wise leadership to L'Arche UK and the National Board, and ensure that the National Board operates within its charitable objectives.
- Work closely with the National Leader to give direction to National Board policy-making and ensure that meetings are well-planned.
- Chair meetings of the National Board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process.
- Ensure that the National Board fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.
- Ensure that the National Board is able to review major risks and associated opportunities regularly and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantages of opportunities whilst managing and mitigating risks.
- Ensure that the National Board fulfils its duties to ensure the sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability
- Ensure that the National Board fulfils its duties to ensure robust safeguarding policies and practices.
- Provide effective liaison between the National Board and the International Federation of L'Arche, strengthening links and conserving the identity and mission of L'Arche within the UK.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- Act as an Ambassador for L'Arche and play a strategic role in forging and deepening partnerships that benefit the work of the charity.
- Act as a spokesperson for L'Arche UK when appropriate.
- Represent L'Arche at external meetings and events.

GOVERNANCE

- With the members of the National Board, ensure good governance of the charity.
- Listen and work collaboratively with members of the Board to make the best use of their specific skills and experience
- With the National Board Vice-Chair, ensure that the National Board is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the charity effectively.
- Ensure regular appraisal of the National Board, of the Board as a whole and of each National Board member –at least every two years.
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the National Board membership.
- Participate in selection and disciplinary processes as appropriate.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL LEADER AND NATIONAL TEAM

- Establish a strongly collaborative and effective working relationship with the National Leader.
- Partner with the National Leader in a way that brings encouragement, challenge, counsel and inspiration, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles.
- Ensure regular liaison with the National Leader and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns and challenges.
- Conduct regular appraisals of the National Leader in collaboration with the international leadership– at least every two years.
- Ensure the National Leader has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.



Who are we looking for?

EXPERIENCE

- Experience of operating effectively at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation.
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.
- Significant experience of chairing meetings and processes effectively.
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and working in partnership with others.
- Experience of living or working alongside adults with learning disabilities or autistic adults, whether within L'Arche or through other personal or professional experience.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- The ability to think creatively, plan strategically, and participate in the leadership of change processes.
- Strong people skills, especially in the areas of collaboration and partnership working.
- Strong leadership skills, with the abilities to motivate, inspire and nurture unity within diversity.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues.
- A clear understanding of charity governance and the role and responsibilities of trustees in the context of L'Arche
- The ability to work effectively and closely with the National Leader in particular, his/her International supervisor and the wider National Team.
- A broad knowledge and understanding of the care sector and/or learning disability and related issues is desirable; however, we will consider applicants who do not currently possess an in-depth knowledge of these areas if they have the capacity and commitment to engage and learn as necessary.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Demonstrable passion for the identity and mission of L'Arche in all its key dimensions, notably community, service, spirituality and outreach as expressed in its Identity and Mission statement and Charter.
- Uphold the values and leadership principles of L'Arche.
- Strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities.
- Tactful and diplomatic, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Strong integrity and honesty, with the ability to be proactive.
- Willing and able to be available potentially for a period of not less than four years.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We actively encourage people with a wide diversity of backgrounds and stories to join us.

We welcome applications from candidates who are disabled, who identify as LGBTQ, or who are from a minority ethnic background, since these perspectives are currently under-represented in our Board.

If there are a few areas in the job description where you feel less experienced, don't let that put you off. We are happy to support people to learn, and to make adjustments to make this role the right fit for the right person.

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.



How to apply

HOW TO APPLY

To be considered for the role, please send your application to recruitment@larche.org.uk

Your application should comprise:

- A CV including a full employment history showing responsibilities held, relevant achievements, and a mobile telephone number (to be used with discretion).
- A cover letter (max 1.5 pages) describing what attracts you to this role and the career and personal experiences that prepare you to serve in it.

The closing date is 5pm on Thursday 29 October 2026.

Please contact us on recruitment@larche.org.uk if you have any questions about this opportunity.

THE PROCESS

We will review applications in week commencing 2 November 2026.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet with the following online on Wednesday 18 November 2026:

- A small group of Trustees;
- Representatives from the National Speaking Council;
- The National Leader;
- L'Arche International representative;

The appointments will be subject to satisfactory references and DBS checks.

Many thanks for your interest in the work of L'Arche.

