



**BUILDING COMMUNITIES WITH PEOPLE
WHO HAVE LEARNING DISABILITIES**

RELATIONSHIP - TRANSFORMATION - SIGN

LIVE-IN CARE AND SUPPORT ASSISTANT VACANCY

L'Arche is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales, No. 1055041.
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Registered office: 10 Briggate, Silsden, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD20 9JT
www.larche.org.uk



HI THERE,

I'm the National Leader/CEO of L'Arche and I wanted to take the opportunity to personally thank you for taking an interest in becoming a live-in assistant for L'Arche. In this Covid-19 crisis, we need our valued live-in assistants now more than ever. It's an opportunity to make a real contribution to the pandemic response, by helping some of our most vulnerable citizens stay safe, happy and connected.

We view the live-in role as making a contribution that goes far beyond a traditional job. At L'Arche, people with and without living disabilities share life together in intentional communities. We eat together, celebrate birthdays and other meaningful occasions together, laugh and play together and just hang out.

Why is this so important to us? Because we believe in the power of relationships to transform the lives of those whose deepest suffering is not their disability, but their experience of isolation and loneliness. When surveyed, adults with learning disabilities often communicate that their greatest need is for friendship and community. A Mencap survey revealed that 50% of people with a learning disability experience chronic loneliness, compared to 15-30% of the general population.

We believe that the community life we offer helps our members with disabilities find a place where they truly belong and where they are valued for their unique gifts. In celebrating this, we enable them to lead full lives and contribute to wider society.

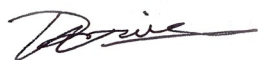
And there's something equally important about communities. In L'Arche we talk about mutual transformation and what we mean by this is that we aren't only transforming lives for those with learning disabilities. We provide an opportunity for their lives to transform yours. Many of our assistants describe feeling part of a family, of learning to be valued for who they are not what they've achieved, of having time to reflect and 'just be', a place where you can be your authentic self regardless of belief, gender, age, ability, religion, ethnicity etc.

Being a L'Arche assistant is more than just a job. We offer opportunities for reflection and spiritual practice (for people of all faiths and none) and qualifications that will help pave a path for a career in social care in the future. We offer friendship and compassion and a whole lot of fun. Communities share meals and host gatherings as varied as barbeques, meditation sessions and boogie nights (though many have had to happen remotely in this time of lockdown). They attract people from around the world from diverse backgrounds, providing an opportunity to learn from each other and to personally grow.

We don't want you to be under any illusions, being a live-in assistant is really hard work. You'll be on a rota for approximately 40hrs per week, working many weekends and will also be required to participate in community gatherings, so the time and energy commitment is significant. Some of the people you support will exhibit challenging behaviours and just like in any family, the relationships you encounter may well force you to confront the uncomfortable. The care sector is highly regulated and the responsibilities expected of you can at times be daunting.

Yet we think it's worth it. The more you give, the more you get back and many of our assistants describe being positively transformed. They learn lots about themselves and grow as people while gaining skills and forging friendships that last a lifetime. Many of our members have remained involved for decades and those who leave us often say that their time at L'Arche has positively influenced the way they view and interact with the world for years to come. If you think you've got what it takes, then why not come and see for yourself. We're only a phone call away if you want to talk this through with us. I for one, look forward to welcoming you.

Best wishes,



LOREN TREISMAN

CEO/National Leader



LIVE-IN CARE AND SUPPORT ASSISTANT

This is your chance to make a real difference and help support, befriend and share life with some of the most vulnerable in our society in the face of the global pandemic of coronavirus while having an experience that provides an opportunity for personal growth and transformation. Join a values led organisation, learn transferable skills and participate in an integrated training and personal development programme.



L'ARCHE COMMUNITIES IN THE UK

Being a Live-In Assistant in a L'Arche community is a valuable opportunity to share your life with people with and without learning disabilities. It is not a typical job, although you will gain valuable experience and qualifications in the social care sector which will facilitate your career development.

We're looking for positive, responsible people who want to work as live-in assistants to be part of a community of people that celebrate, eat, laugh, share and support each other. You will be encouraged to be your authentic self as well as to reflect and grow. This role can be challenging and demanding. You will learn a lot about yourself and other people but above all, being a Live-In Assistant is an opportunity to be part of a global movement that will positively transform you and change the way you contribute to society in the future.

In a world that rewards success and winning, L'Arche communities are places where people can take time to explore who they are, not just what they can do.

‘Quite simply being part of L'Arche is being loved for who you are.’

Archana, L'Arche London Assistant

Watch this video to get a sense of how L'Arche has transformed the lives of some of our assistants:

MY LIFE IN L'ARCHE

At this challenging time, we need people with a genuine desire to support people with learning disabilities and who are willing to undertake appropriate training.

L'Arche communities are places of welcome where everyone, people with and without disabilities alike, are transformed by the experience of community, relationship, disability and difference.

As a Live - In Assistant in a L'Arche community you will be supporting people with learning disabilities. Along with one or two other assistants, you will most likely live with a small number of people with learning disabilities in their home. You will be provided with full board and lodging within our communities, as well as a monthly allowance.

We have preference for candidates who are willing to commit to at least a year, though we are open to applications from students, furloughed employees or others who are able to commit at least three months. No experience is necessary.

WHY L'ARCHE?

For more than 40 years L'Arche UK has been providing high quality, person centred care, but we're far more than a service provider. L'Arche UK is part of an international federation of intentional communities where people with and without learning disabilities live together, working for a world where all belong.

Watch our **#AsIAm** video series, each based in a different L'Arche Community around the world:

#ASIAM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT L'ARCHE:

[FACEBOOK](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[INSTAGRAM](#)

[SOUNDCLOUD](#)

[MEDIUM](#)

HOW TO APPLY:

Find the application form here:

larche.org.uk/live-in-assistants

or email recruitment@larche.org.uk

or phone **07879 054886**

L'ARCHE IDENTITY AND MISSION STATEMENT

IDENTITY:

- We are people with and without learning disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation.
- Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together.
- We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognise our need of one another.

MISSION:

- Make known the gifts of people with learning disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships.
- Foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members whilst being faithful to the core values of our founding story.
- Engage in our diverse cultures, working together towards a more human society.

WE VALUE:

- **Treating people with dignity and respect:** We value every person and celebrate who they are. We do not just tolerate diversity, but actively embrace it in our communities. A key way we demonstrate dignity and respect is by being fully present to each other when we are together and listening deeply to one another.
- **Friendliness and welcome:** We are deeply committed to building friendships together, which calls us to live life with a joyful and grateful spirit. A key way we demonstrate friendliness and welcome is by offering meaningful invitation and welcome to newcomers and also to each other on a daily basis.
- **Empathy:** We are committed to understanding and sharing the feelings of one another. We prioritise the qualities of compassion, caring, and kindness to nurture empathy. A key way we demonstrate empathy is through the quality of the shared life we build together.
- **Integrity:** We strive to have integrity in everything we do and in every relationship we build, seeking to be authentic and honest, trustworthy and open because to build meaningful relationships we need to reveal who we are. A key way we demonstrate integrity is through our willingness to be both vulnerable and courageous.
- **Commitment to community building:** We choose to share life together rather than merely work together. Sharing life means we create mutual relationships with one another and also share responsibility for the life and wellbeing of the community as a whole, practicing forgiveness and celebration and creating a place of belonging that is open to all who share our mission and values. A key way we demonstrate our commitment to community building is through our nurturing of our shared spirituality expressed through the community traditions and practices that shape our daily life together.
- **Openness to reflection, learning and growth:** We are personally committed to growth and development in the dimensions of L'Arche identity and mission and also support the growth of the whole community by nurturing the gifts of each person, creating a learning culture together and being attentive to our personal and communal spiritual life. A key way we demonstrate our commitment to learning is the frequency and quality of our personal and group reflective practices and processes.
- **Commitment to the vision and mission of L'Arche:** We actively engage in all dimensions of L'Arche mission and practice both personally and communally. A key way we demonstrate our commitment is our visibility as people with and without learning disabilities together engaged in our local neighbourhoods and the wider world in order to shape a more human society.



TOM'S STORY

Tom Cullimore is part of the L'Arche Edinburgh Community. His journey with L'Arche began several years ago when he lived in the Agapè Community in Quebec, Canada. There he met a man with a learning disability called Bernard. While the two of them shared no common language, Tom came to understand something of the essence of L'Arche: that to know somebody, and share in life together, has little to do with language and everything to do with a willingness to be present.

I didn't say very much when I first came to L'Arche. It wasn't a question of being shy – rather I couldn't speak the language. I was nineteen and had just arrived at the Agapè Community in Quebec, Canada. Within a few hours it was clear that the French I had learnt at school wasn't going to be particularly useful.

Not that it mattered at all to Bernard. All he needed to know was my name and whether I would be willing to watch the hockey on TV that coming Saturday. I said that I would (or, a very obliging bilingual assistant told him I would on my behalf) and we were set.

His team, the Montreal Canadians, won 5-3. At full time, Bernard turned and said something to me. I didn't have a clue what he had said. Smiling, he called somebody over to translate and I learnt that he had offered to buy me breakfast the next morning to say thank you for watching the game with him.

That was Bernard in a nutshell. Overwhelmingly generous and warm, choosing not to dwell on what I couldn't do – instead on what I could, and giving me credit for it.

In 2015 I moved to L'Arche Edinburgh, initially as a live-in assistant and later as a live-out assistant. I have very different relationships with the core members in my current house to those that I formed with Bernard and others in the Agapè Community, each one reflecting a quality unique to that individual. Among countless examples, Jonathan rattles off impressions that have me howling with laughter, while David produces works of art that I could spend all day looking at.

The range of personalities and needs can be a little disorientating at times. One minute you might be dazzled by a straight-talking, no-nonsense core member and the next moment you might be required to switch gears to engage with someone who communicates non-verbally.

L'Arche houses are brilliantly eclectic and that is a large part of what makes working in them so much fun. At the same time, accepting difference doesn't mean living in denial of the fact that it can be tiring and challenging.

It is, of course, entirely worth it. Supporting people with learning disabilities to express themselves, learn and develop new skills, or meet an aspiration they have set – all of these are immensely engaging and fulfilling ways to spend your time.

It's continually surprising, too - as much now as it was then. On the day I met Bernard I didn't think he would be buying me breakfast four days later, but come Sunday morning there we were and that worked out pretty well. Surprising is good.



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