

2008/2009

# L'Arche Belfast



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## What Is L'Arche?

L'Arche (*French for 'The Ark'*) is an international federation of 131 communities worldwide. By *'community'* we mean a group of people of different ages, creeds, capacities and social and ethnic backgrounds connected to one another through a belief that everyone, irrespective of their circumstances, can make a difference and change the world. In our communities people with and without learning disabilities choose to live together in a spirit of friendship. We recognize the unique value of every person, the gifts we have to offer and our need for one another.

L'Arche promotes strong community-based human support services and creates opportunities for people who have learning disabilities to take up their place in the world, to offer their gifts, to realize their potential and be enabled to make an active contribution to society.

***'Will you be my friend'?*** Raphael Simi was a man with Down's Syndrome living in a long term institutional setting. His longing for friendship transformed the heart of Jean Vanier (son of the Governor General of Canada) and lead him to invite Raphael and his friend Philippe to create a home with him in a nearby village. This became the first community of L'Arche in France in 1964 and set in motion a way of being and sharing life that expresses – ***"Yes, I will be your friend"***

Like Raphael, people who have limited intellectual capacity often have a heightened heart intelligence that transforms the lives of those with whom they are in relationship. For this reason they are acknowledged as being the *'Core Members'* of our communities. Because of their visible needs and vulnerability and their authentic presence, they have much to teach us about welcome, hospitality, our shared humanity and our need for one another.

*"L'Arche is about changing the world one heart  
at a time"*

Jean Vanier, Founder of L'Arche

We experience community as a quality of the heart that draws people together leading them into mutually transformative relationships and meaningful ways of belonging to one another as friends, family, neighbours and citizens.

## L'Arche in Belfast

### L'Arche in Belfast:

Since October 2001, as an intentional life sharing community and in a joint management partnership with Oaklee Housing Association L'Arche Belfast has been supporting and empowering adults who have severe learning disabilities to live full and meaningful lives in their own home at **563 Ormeau Road, BT7 3JA**.

As well as offering people opportunities for friendship, participation and belonging through the activities and work of the community we provide 24 hour Domiciliary Care and Housing Support Services.

## Our Vision

We are committed to a vision of the world where everyone, irrespective of capacity, creed, colour, race, age or gender, has a place where they belong and can offer their gifts.



## Our Mission

- To make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities revealed through mutually transforming relationships.
- To foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members.
- To engage with others who share our vision to work together toward a more human society.

## Our Values

**Love:** We acknowledge the transformative power of love and we recognise that care and support are primarily a function of loving committed relationships.

**Respect:** We believe that all human life is sacred, having equal and unconditional value. We strive to respect everybody for who they are, for their strengths and abilities, and for what they can contribute to community and society.

**Trust:** Trust in God and in one another is at the heart of our journey together in community.

**Simplicity:** We opt for a simple lifestyle. Moderation and balance underlie our choices and we are committed to using our resources, including money and time, in ways that are most likely to make life better for ourselves and others.

**Interdependence:** We recognize that 'dependence and independence' are inherent aspects of life. We recognize that beyond any roles or status that may define us, as human beings we are interconnected and interdependent and rely on one another physically, economically, ecologically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and politically. We promote mutuality and co-operation in all aspects of community life and service provision.

**Common Sense:** In response to challenging situations and opportunities we are committed to making decisions and taking actions that are simple and practical.

**Diversity:** We intentionally welcome, respect and celebrate difference and we affirm the great diversity of the human community. We are committed to equal opportunities and we seek to ensure that we are representative of and enriched by the communities and groups of people who make up the society in which we live.

**Participation:** We value 'being with' rather than 'doing for' people and we support people to take their part, to have a voice, to be at the centre of their own planning and to take the risks associated with their life choices.

**Meaningful Contribution:** In the context of living fulfilled lives we believe that it is important for all of us have the opportunity to consider the meaning of our work. We desire that the people associated with L'Arche will experience their work as a response to a call and we wish to encourage and nurture deep commitments, friendships, non-paid relationships, and life sharing.

**The Power of Possibility:** We encourage people to create possibilities for their lives that delight them, fulfil their concerns, and give them futures worth living into and we support one another in the fulfilment of those possibilities.

**Environmental Responsibility:** We aim to minimize our negative impact on the environment by supporting people in the reduction of waste, promotion of recycling and composting, greener consumption and transport and energy efficiency. We actively seek to reduce the community's carbon footprint and work towards more sustainable environmental practices.

**Natural Supports:** Much of the activity of L'Arche Belfast focuses on supporting people to create friendships within their local communities so that they can be supported in a natural way by friends and neighbours. In a climate of reducing public resources we see an opportunity to take up the role of facilitator of community and neighbourhood support in addition to the provision of essential support services.

**Citizenship:** Everyone, regardless of background and ability has the ability to contribute to his or her community in a meaningful way. Giving of ourselves helps us establish a sense of belonging and identity and to make a difference in the lives of others.



## Our Service:

L'Arche Belfast promotes and ensures quality and safe practice in every aspect of our life as a community and in the service we provide. We offer life-long 24 hour care and support to adults who have learning disabilities living in their own homes in their local communities.

Support is provided in the context of an interdenominational Christian community by a committed and competent team of assistants and support workers. The level of support is agreed in response to individual need and in line with individual 'person centred plans'. As well as the help that people need in self care and in the activities of daily life we offer people support in exercising choices... making decisions... having maximum control over the direction of their own destiny... experiencing appropriate degrees of power... collaborating with others positively... making constructive use of opportunities ... experiencing autonomy... weighing up consequences... contributing their unique gifts to the wellbeing of the community ... learning from experience ... and adapting to changing needs and circumstances.

**REGISTERED PROVIDER:** L'Arche Belfast cultivates an affirmative, equal opportunity and diverse workforce and is committed to conducting its business with integrity and in accordance with regulation.

**Maria Garvey**, is the Community Leader and Director of Services and is responsible for the overall service provision and development of the community. She has worked with people who have disabilities in various contexts for more than 30 years. She is a university graduate with a degree in education and a post-graduate diploma in Special Education. She also has foundational certification in art and play therapies and therapeutic clowning. She also has extensive training in organisational development and in leadership and is a certified organisational consultant.

**Address:** C/o The Ember, 563 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 3JA

**Tel:** 028 90 221337

**Email:** [leader@larchebelfast.org.uk](mailto:leader@larchebelfast.org.uk)

**REGISTERED MANAGER: Scott Shively** is the House Leader and Registered Manager and is responsible for managing the provision of domiciliary care and housing support in accordance with community principles and regulatory standards. Scott is currently awaiting confirmation of membership N.I.S.C.C. He has 10 years experience of providing care and support in the context of L'Arche both in Belfast and in Seattle and also as a manager of a low income housing complex in Seattle. He is a university graduate, has training in nonviolence and has received both in-house and external training and attitudinal formation in person centeredness and the principles interdependence and community living, the management of aggression, SCIP, health and safety, risk management, food hygiene, infection control, moving and handling, medication, POVA, and First Aid at work.

As part of his ongoing training and development he will be participating in N.V.Q. level 4 Management Training in 2009.

**Address and Tel:** as above.

**Email:** [manager@larchebelfast.org.uk](mailto:manager@larchebelfast.org.uk)



## Our Team

The 'Core Members' are cared for and supported by a team of dedicated, skilled, caring and competent people from diverse backgrounds. They ensure that the highest standards of care are maintained at all times.

Many of our support workers and long term, 'live in assistants' choose

L'Arche not simply as a job but as a way of life. The majority of our team are people who have had previous work or voluntary experience with children or other vulnerable groups in society and most of them have a third level educational background.

We are committed to providing all team members with support and conditions of service which enable them to carry out their jobs to the highest standards whilst retaining work-life balance and giving them opportunities to further their professional development.

We offer people role related skills training and L'Arche personal, community and spiritual formation:

- Formal induction
- Person Centred Development Plans agreed at the end of probationary period and used as the basis of supervision and appraisal to meet job related and personal objectives
- Regular in-house programme of appropriate training
- Opportunities for reflection on the vision, mission, values and underpinning principles of L'Arche
- Access to external training where necessary
- Regular one to one support and supervision
- Regular team meetings to generate ideas, create policy and problem solve
- Team away days to celebrate and build on success
- Reflective practice
- Consultation with all those affected on changes and policies
- Opportunities individually and in groups to contribute to planning and policy making
- Attention to work-life balance and flexibility in scheduling where possible

Details of the current Care and Support Team - **Appendix 1**

# Organisational Structure and Community Processes

## Governance

L'Arche Belfast is a company limited by guarantee registered in Northern Ireland No. N140702. It is also a Registered Charity No XR51980. We are members of the International Federation of L'Arche and bound by its constitution and charter.

We have robust organisational structures and community processes that ensure that the activities we engage in and the services we provide serve our mission, comply with all pertinent regulation and meet the minimum standards as outlined in *Quality Standards for Health and Social Care 2006*

The Board of Directors is currently made up of 6 people who are personally committed to the vision, mission, values and principles of L'Arche and are professionally competent to ensure the provision and development of a quality service – **Appendices 2a&2b**

As an intentional community all decisions are made through processes of consultation that include the voices of everyone directly or indirectly involved by the consequences.

Governance and management at every level is conducted in an open, transparent and inclusive manner and every member of the community irrespective of role is encouraged to participate in an open and honest way.

## Management:

The Community Leader/Director of Services holds overall responsibility for operational management of L'Arche Belfast. Management for direct care and support is delegated to the House Leader/Registered Manager (full time), supported by a part-time admin co-ordinator and a bookkeeper.

Organisational Flow Chart – **Appendix 3**



## Who do we support?

- Anyone in the greater Belfast area who is 18 years and over and has a learning disability whose support needs will be met by what we offer.
- People who need more than just a home of their own and care and support services but are seeking possibilities for friendship and belonging and are willing to participate in the life of the community.
- People whose behaviours do not pose an unmanageable risk to themselves or others in their home or in the community.



## Referral and Admission Procedures

We accept requests for consideration from people themselves, from their families, friends, advocates, health services or social services. However, all formal referrals must be made through a Health and Social Services Trust in liaison with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to determine eligibility for domiciliary care and housing support. All formal care and support services must be funded at an approved rate.

### Stages of Admission:

1. Application/Referral
  - A user friendly application form based on the tools of P.C.P
  - A professional referral form must be completed with accompanying social, medical, psychological, educational/work, financial and other relevant reports.
2. Interview
  - An interview or observation of the applicant in their home and /or workplace
  - An interview with family/guardians when appropriate
  - An interview with other relevant professionals

### 3. Capacity

- We determine our capacity to support the applicant to live a full and meaningful life and to manage the associated risks. *(This is done in liaison with the applicant themselves, the agencies directly involved in their lives, their family and/or guardians or advocates and any other professionals deemed helpful to the process.)*

### 4. Come and see....

- Short visits
- Overnight visits
- Orientation period followed by a review (usually a week)
- A trial period followed by a full review (usually 3 months)

- 5. Following a successful trial period the person is fully welcomed into the community and is offered a service of care and support.

Because we are committed to taking the time needed to ensure that there is a good fit between the person's needs and the service we provide this process can take between 4 months and a year.



## Our Aims

The primary task of L'Arche is to create a community that acknowledges the profound desire of every human being for love, friendship, respect and autonomy and where everyone has a place and can offer their gifts.

In our relationships, interactions and activities we strive to foster an atmosphere of welcome, friendship and belonging and create an environment where people can grow, make choices and be valued and contributing members of society.

We seek to reveal the particular gifts of people who have learning disabilities in creating a softer, slower and more human world.

## Our Objectives

**Self Care:** To provide discreet and respectful support to people in all aspects of their personal care – teaching skills and encouraging independence where appropriate.

**Home Making:** To teach people the skills that help them to create a comfortable, safe and secure home with others where they have a real sense of belonging and control.

**Community Building:** To support people to participate in their local churches, clubs, leisure centres etc. and to shop locally.

**Personal Development:** To support people to reach their full potential by offering opportunities to grow, learn, and develop personally, interpersonally, creatively and spiritually.

**Going for it:** To encourage people to create possibilities for themselves that excite them and to help them to take the steps necessary to make that possibility a reality.

**Risk Management:** To identify, in liaison with all of those involved, the risks inherent in exercising personal choice and following a dream. We will develop plans and actions that realize the positive potential and minimize the negative. We are committed using available professional and other resources and support to help people achieve their desired outcomes in a safe and sustainable way.

**Family and Friends:** To assist people to maintain and deepen their relationships with family and friends and to include family and friends in community activities.

**Professional Relationships:** To assist people to create and maintain professional relationships and support systems.

## Principles of Care

L'Arche provides a values lead service that advocates in favour of the following:

- A service where the needs, gifts, dreams and desires of the Core Members are at the centre.
- Listening to Core Members, their families and to care and support assistants ensuring that all contributions are equally valued.
- Appropriate training and development for everyone in the community to ensure a skill mix amongst team members which ensures a comprehensive service of care and support to the Core Members.
- High professional standards which are monitored and reviewed to ensure quality and consistency in service delivery.
- An approach to care and support which advocates at all times, confidentiality, respect, privacy and dignity.
- Managing the necessary risks that are inherent in people living full and rich lives.
- Realizing dreams and fulfilling possibilities which may require opening up opportunities that do not depend on the limited resources the system has available.
- Age and Cultural Appropriateness.

*A society that is truly human not only cares for its weakest and most vulnerable members but recognises and welcomes their unique gifts as an essential contribution to the wellbeing of the whole.*

## Quality of Care

We are committed to providing high quality services and endeavour to improve the quality of our services through:

- Multi-disciplinary reviews
- Working with other service providers and community organisations
- Staff education and development
- Service user, carer and/or advocate involvement in the planning of service developments
- Annual supervisory visits by L'Arche International



## What are your views?

Your compliments, suggestions or complaints help us appreciate and improve our service. If you have suggestions please send them in writing to the registered manager who will ensure that they are included in a planning meeting and acted upon in an appropriate manner.

## How to give a compliment or make a complaint

You will find our Compliments and Complaints Policy attached. **(Appendix 1)**

## How to contact us

In writing to L'Arche Belfast, 563 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 3JA

By telephone to our office on 028 90 221337

By email at [admin@larchebelfast.org.uk](mailto:admin@larchebelfast.org.uk)

To learn more about L'Arche, our current work and our plans for the future our web address is [www.larchebelfast.org.uk](http://www.larchebelfast.org.uk)



## L'Arche Belfast Employees

Support Worker	Address	Start Date
Gosia Goc	563 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3JA	01 October 2007
Heather Torney	21 Knockdene Park Ballynahinch BT24 8 XH	03 November 2008
James Adams	119 The Mount Belfast BT5 4ND	01 September 2008
Jana Kubatova	109 The Mount Belfast Flat 1 BT5 4ND	03 November 2008
Kristy Takel	408 Ormeau Road Flat 3 Belfast BT7 3HY	16 May 2008
Megan Blinn	58 Knockeden Park Belfast BT6 0JF	22 September 2001
Neil Mullan	9 Croft Close Holywood BT18 0PG	01 October 2008
Rebecca Gower	563 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3JA	01 April 2007
Ruth Kennedy	19 Floral Park Newtownabbey BT36 7RU	09 July 2008
Sharon Matchett	28 Cyprus Gardens Belfast BT5 6SB	01 February 2008

Administration and Management	Address	Start Date
Faythe Aiken	119 The Mount Belfast BT5 4ND	01 September 2008
Henri Harpur	2 Castleview Cottage Gardens Belfast BT5 7FP	10 June 2008
Lesley Gould	46 Sydenham Avenue Belfast BT4 2DR	08 October 2008
Maria Garvey	40 Barnetts Road Belfast BT7 5BB	11 October 2000
Scott Shively	58 Knockeden Park Belfast BT6 0JF	22 September 2001

Long Term Live-In Assistants	Address	Start Date
Barbara Nagi	563 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3JA	03 February 2009
Gabriella Sahdo	563 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 3JA	01 October 2008

## Appendix 2a

# THE ROLE OF A BOARD MEMBER IN L'ARCHE BELFAST

### Description

The role of a Board Member is to share responsibility for the governance of L'Arche Belfast with other Board Members so that it meets its duties under N.I. law and in line with the constitution and charter of L'Arche International.

L'Arche espouses the principle of shared authority so the role of a L'Arche Board is always carried out in consultation with other **community life** structures.

The responsibility of the Board is:

- To ensure that L'Arche Belfast complies with its governing documents, Charity law, Company law and any other relevant primary and secondary legislation.
- To ensure that L'Arche Belfast operates in accordance with the Charter of L'Arche and the Constitution and respects the human and civil rights of all members.
- To ensure that L'Arche Belfast pursues its objects as defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- To ensure L'Arche Belfast uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, not for activities outside these objects.
- In liaison with the community life committee (*formerly known as the community council*), to give firm strategic direction to L'Arche Belfast, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To ensure that high standards of person-centred care in the L'Arche Belfast Community are achieved and monitored.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of L'Arche Belfast.
- To ensure the financial stability of L'Arche Belfast through the setting and monitoring of agreed budgets.
- To protect and manage the assets of L'Arche Belfast and to ensure proper investment of the charity's funds.
- To ensure that all employees and volunteers are properly recruited, trained, supervised and appraised.
- To act as the ultimate court of appeal for grievances and disciplinary matters;
- To safeguard the good name and values of L'Arche.
- To take an active part in the governance of the charity through the use of any specific skills, knowledge and/or experience by:
  - Attending Board meetings.
  - Attending Sub-Committee meetings as required.
  - Scrutinizing Board or Sub-Committee papers.
  - Leading on issues in which the Board Member has special expertise.
  - Respecting the confidentiality of all Board papers and proceedings.

## **The Attributes and Attitude of a Board Member**

- Has a caring Christian attitude and a commitment to the values, ethos and mission of L'Arche Belfast;
- Is prepared to undertake induction training and continuing training and development;
- Is willing to devote the necessary time and effort to prepare for, and attend meetings;
- Is open to taking on special responsibilities in line with their skills, knowledge and experience;
- Is able to think creatively and strategically;
- Is able to show good, independent judgement;
- Is willing to speak their mind;
- Can understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship;
- Is able to work effectively as a member of a team;
- Is not disqualified from trusteeship under any statutory rules;
- Is committed to the 7 principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, honesty objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership; [www.info.gov.hk/info/eoc/annex7\\_e.pdf](http://www.info.gov.hk/info/eoc/annex7_e.pdf)
- Is willing to be in real relationship with the other members of the community, to attend Community events as time permits and to work in partnership with the operational and reflective structures of the community

## **Appendix 2b**

### **Board of Directors 2008/2009**

#### **Chair Person:**

**John Black** – Director

Occupation – Head of C&SCG Review and Independent Health Care Regulation, RQIA, past member of L'Arche Liverpool

Board Membership – 7.5 years

#### **Company Secretary:**

**Michael Sheil** – Director

Occupation – Barrister

Board Membership – 2 years.

#### **Honorary Treasurer:**

**Alphonsus Corr** – Director

Occupation – Financial Consultant (Retired Bank Manager)

Board Membership – 2 years

#### **Ordinary Members:**

**Gerardine Cunningham** – Director

Occupation – Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Board Membership – 7.5 years

**John Baird** – Director

Occupation – Architect, long-term member of Corrymeela Community

Board Membership – 2 years

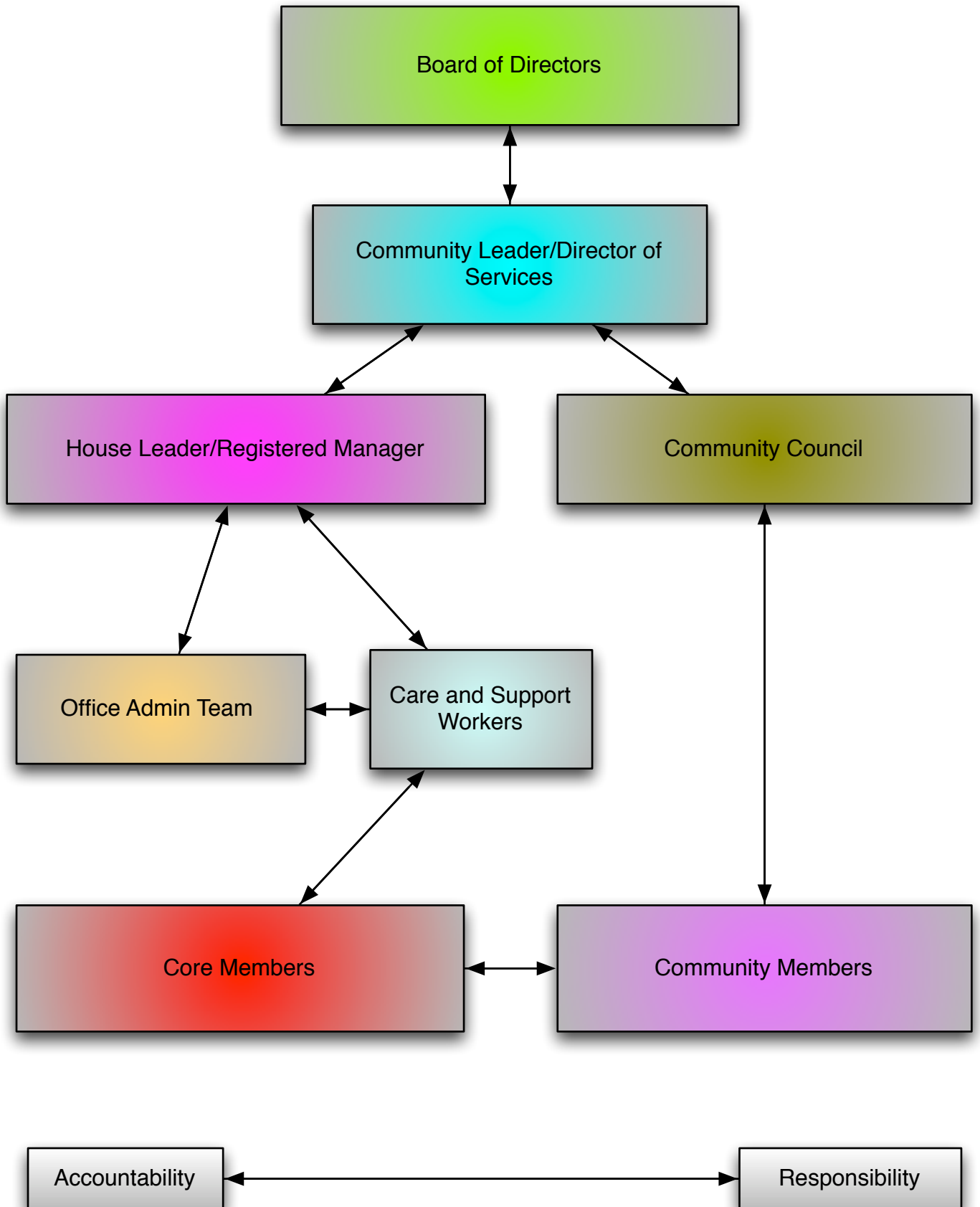
**Shelagh Caldwell** - Director

Occupation – Retired Teacher and director of Adelaide House

Board Membership – Appointed Dec. 2008.

**L'ARCHE BELFAST  
ORGANISATIONAL FLOW  
CHART**

# L'Arche Belfast Organizational Chart



## Appendix 4

### COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS POLICY

Last Updated 03/09

L'Arche Belfast is committed to providing the highest quality service to all our stakeholders and we recognize that the way we manage feedback, complaints and compliments is an important part of this.

#### Compliments

Every effort is made in the community to offer positive feedback whenever possible. This is done formally during review/appraisal processes and when celebrating birthdays, and other special events. To compliment somebody on a particular achievement or task completed beyond expectation, the community encourages that this be done in writing if possible. Such written compliments are much appreciated and are held on file.

#### Complaints

We aim to ensure that:

- all who use our services know how to make a complaint and can do so easily - with support if necessary - and without fear of being victimised
- complainants are kept informed about timescales and progress
- we will manage complaints honestly, constructively, sensitively and fairly
- complaints are resolved at the earliest opportunity in the most efficient and effective way, causing the minimum possible stress to the complainants
- complaints together with compliments are used to identify, share and implement service improvements

There are 3 stages to our complaints procedure:

#### Stage 1: Informal Resolution

At this stage we aim to resolve the complaint informally and encourage the complainant to speak to local staff about their concerns. Employees should speak to the scheme Manager; Core members and/or their advocate should speak to their reference person or the scheme Manager.

This is the stage most people find successful.

## **Stage 2: Investigation**

If the complainant is not fully satisfied with the outcome of the informal stage they should make their complaint, preferably in writing, to the Director of Services, L'Arche Belfast, 563 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 3JA. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent on the date of receipt of the complaint and an investigation will be carried out.

A full response will be given within 20 working days. If for some reason this is not possible, complainants will be kept fully informed of the reason for any delay.

## **Stage 3: Review**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the findings of the investigation, they may request a review. This must be put in writing, detailing why they want the decision reviewed, within 30 days of the investigation response.

The review process will involve the Chairperson of the Board of Directors who will review the complaint, investigation and decision and reply to the complainant within 20 working days.

This stage is not treated as a new complaint or re-investigation.

Stage 3 is the final part of the L'Arche Belfast complaints management procedure.

If complainants still feel that L'Arche Belfast has not treated them fairly, or not done what we reasonably could, then they may make an appeal to:

### **Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)**

9th Floor, Riverside Tower

5 Lanyon Place

Belfast BT1 3BT

Tel: 9051 7500

Fax: 9051 7501

Email: [info@rqia.org.uk](mailto:info@rqia.org.uk)

Website: [www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

**The Ombudsman**

Freepost BEL 1478

Belfast BT1 6BR

(NO STAMP REQUIRED)

Tel: 0800 343424 (Free phone)

Fax: 028 90234912

Email: [ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Oaklee Housing Association (housing and tenancy related issues only)**

37-41 May Street

Belfast BT1 4DN

Tel: 9044 1300

Website: [www.oaklee.org.uk](http://www.oaklee.org.uk)