



Chief Executive

Appointment brief

October 2025

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chief executive & director
recruitment practice

HarrisHill
charity recruitment specialists



About us

St Luke's Community Centre is a charity making south Islington a better place to work, learn and play for all ages.

At St Luke's Community Centre, we can trace our roots back over 500 years to parish bequests made to relieve poverty in south Islington. Those early legacies were amalgamated into the substantial endowment we manage today. In 1982 the Centre opened on Central Street, and in 2019 we underwent a pivotal transformation by extending services - previously for older people only, who represent 8% of the population in the community - to all age groups within our strictly defined area of benefit – the old parish boundary. Now in our 43rd year at this purpose-built site, St Luke's marries respect for our rich heritage with modern, nimble delivery.

Under our outgoing CEO Michael Ryan's eleven-year stewardship, our programme of community events has grown year-on-year, and in 2021 we became the first organisation in Islington to achieve the rigorous Trusted Standard benchmark after a two-year, organisation-wide review. During the Covid-19 pandemic we never closed: chefs prepared daily meals, telephone befriending and welfare checks were established, and our outreach team maintained vital connections, to make sure we were there for our community at the hardest of times. The effectiveness of our response to the pandemic further cemented our already strong relationship with the community and local authorities.

What we do

Each week St Luke's delivers over 100 activities, events and support sessions. Our Wellbeing & Food Hub offers food, welfare advice and referrals; in 2025, it will transition into a community shop model, improving dignity and choice. The Central Street Cookery School repurposes surplus food to teach healthy home cooking and avoid waste, with all private-hire income reinvested into community classes. Our Employment & IT Advice centre combines CV workshops, interview practice and basic digital-skills training to tackle local unemployment. For older residents—who represent just 8 per cent of the parish population—we run a daily lunch club, Men's Shed and door-to-door transport, while intergenerational groups foster connections between schoolchildren, families and seniors. Additional community staples include quarterly user-committee meetings, the Growing Connections gardening programme (on-site Edible Yard and off-site allotments), and our annual Christmas-Day meal and gift distribution, ensuring nobody spends the holiday alone.

St Luke's Vision

St Luke's is a welcoming Community Centre in south Islington for people of all ages to contribute to working, playing and learning together for their mutual benefit and wellbeing.

St Luke's Mission

St Luke's will achieve its vision through creating a better sense of community which is facilitated by:

- Providing a Community Centre that is a hub for local people and organisations to work, play and learn in south Islington.
- Providing and enabling services, activities and events that are delivered to a high standard and are open to all.
- Providing a voice for and on behalf of the local area to ensure that local services identified as required are provided to meet local needs.

Strategic Objectives

- Tackle disadvantage including supporting people with employment skills.
- Improve wellbeing of local people.
- Build a sense of community.

Our values

St Luke's work is animated by five core values, lived daily by our 44 permanent and 20 casual staff and hundreds of volunteers:

- Inclusion
- Equality
- Friendship
- Wellbeing
- Support

Governance

Our charitable structure comprises St Luke's Parochial Trust (Registered Charity Number 207497), St Luke's Trustee Ltd (corporate trustee) and St Luke's Trading Ltd. Governance is vested in a fifteen-member [Board of Trustees](#) - three appointed by Islington Council, one by the City of London, two from the local church, the ex-officio vicar and co-opted experts - who serve up to three four-year terms. Raymond O'Halloran has been a trustee since 2017 and Chair since 2019; his three-year term as Chair concludes in Sept 2026, after which he will remain on the Board and Kieran Wadia, the Deputy Chair (having shadowed for one year) will assume the Chair role.

The Board meets quarterly, supported by Finance, Quality & Governance and Remuneration committees. Following the CEO's recommendation, the Board has approved a three-year rolling strategy which is reviewed annually for agility.

Finances

St Luke's benefits from a £20 million investment portfolio, managed by Rathbones (next investment review due 2028), whose income is inviolably dedicated to programmes in the area of benefit. In 2023 we prudently bought out our final-salary pension scheme, reducing future liabilities. Our current annual turnover (~£2 million) comprises:

- **Endowment income** (c. 40%)
- **Trading income** (c. 33%) from room hire, cookery-school bookings and corporate events
- **Grants & donations**, including restricted funds and legacy gifts
- **Fundraising & sponsorship**, Our Director of Services, splitting her time three days on income generation and two days on frontline delivery, has secured 91% of her annual target within six months.

Throughout Covid, the Board endorsed the CEO's proposal to redirect reserves into frontline services, creating a deficit which is now being addressed via a break-even plan.

Challenges and opportunities

- Balancing the board's return-to-break-even mandate with the growing demand for high-quality, accessible services.
- Meeting escalating need - driven by Covid legacy and cost-of-living pressures.
- The local authority is expected to make £90 million of budget cuts by the national government, which has strong implications for funding available to local charities like St Luke's
- Continuing to grow our user base (which has already increased ten-fold since 2011) without overwhelming staff.
- Unlocking new income lines and maximising income from our assets - expanding room hire and cookery-school capacity, and exploring digital social-enterprise ventures.
- Reinvigorating corporate fundraising partnerships with the major business that have bases within our area of benefit, including banks, law firms and architects, to deliver sustainable support.

Read more about St Luke's:

[Our website](#)

[Our page on the Charity Commission's website](#)

[Recent accounts](#)



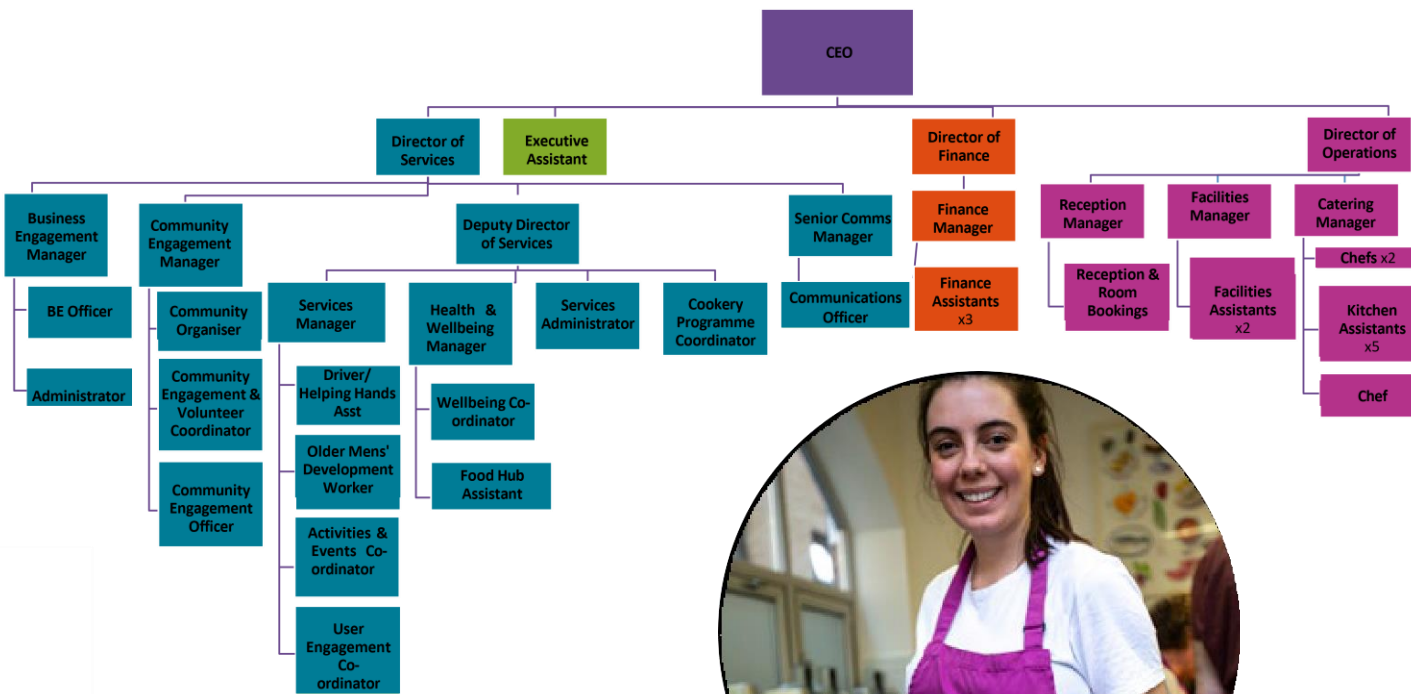
Our new Chief Executive

What success will look like under our new Chief Executive's leadership

- **1 year from appointment**
 - Corporate sponsors, local authority contacts and umbrella organisations report stable or increased engagement.
 - A robust, trustee-approved plan to achieve budget break-even is implemented without material service cuts.
 - Trading-arm revenue grows via expanded room hire and cookery-school bookings, meeting set commercial targets.
 - New CEO has established strong working relationships with staff, guests, trustees, the wider community, corporate funders and the local authority.
 - The Trusted Standard benchmark is retained.
- **5 years from appointment**
 - Membership and service-user numbers across all age groups continue to grow.
 - Reserves replenished to pre-pandemic levels, underpinned by diversified income - including new income streams.
 - A cohesive executive team in place, with clear reporting lines and succession plans documented.
 - Continued excellence in quality across all areas of work.
 - Our values and our community are kept central to all decisions.



Organisational chart



Job description

Job title: Chief Executive

Accountable to: The Trustees of the Charity through the Chairman

Directly responsible for: Director of Operations, Director of Services, Director of Finance, Executive Assistant, Overall staff of 44 people plus volunteers

Main purpose of Job

- To realise the Charity's vision; in partnership with trustees, to develop and implement the strategy and achieve its aims.
- To lead St Luke's and its employees and volunteers, making best use of resources and maintaining engagement and motivation.
- To develop and sustain excellence in all areas of the Charity.
- To promote the Charity in order to develop and maintain external relationships with stakeholders, maximise income and achieve the best possible outcomes for our beneficiaries.

Key Responsibilities

- Take executive responsibility for, and inspire people at all levels in the Charity in, the day-to-day management of the Charity's activities; to ensure a shared ownership of the vision, mission and strategic aims.
- Provide the framework within which trustees can participate in setting the strategic direction and policies of the Charity for both internal and external audiences; and to ensure that the Trustees are provided with appropriate management and other information in order to make decisions.
- Advise on the governance and organizational structure and systems of the Charity so that they comply with good practice, continuously improve, support our work, and to ensure that all constitutional, regulatory and legal obligations are fulfilled.
- Set, direct and monitor the achievement of the objectives required to deliver the Charity's strategy, within a framework of good governance and quality, and with sufficient and appropriate income.
- Seek opportunities to expand, enhance the reputation, and promote awareness of the Charity's work, representing the Charity at events, conferences, meetings and with staff, trustees and other volunteers.
- Seek opportunities to generate income.

- Promote diversity and equality of opportunity across the Charity.
- Ensure that high quality services provided to the community meet its needs and are delivered within a framework of quality performance.
- Ensure good practice is maintained in the recruitment, management, appraisal and professional development of staff, and to ensure that appropriate staff records are maintained.
- Oversee financial planning and budgeting; and ensure that effective accounting and reporting systems are in place. Oversee investment management and strategy for the portfolios of stocks and shares and investment property and ensure that proper records are kept.
- Ensure that the Charity's buildings and resources are used effectively and properly maintained and comply with all relevant current legislation and good practice.
- Manage risk across the Charity so as to minimize liability and maximise potential opportunity, and to ensure the resilience and business continuity of the Charity and its services.

Because the post holder will be working with vulnerable older people and children, the post is subject to enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.



Person specification

It is expected that that successful candidate will be able to demonstrate a strong record against the criteria in both sections.

Experience and Knowledge

- Track record of successful visionary senior leadership within a multi-purpose organisation.
- Experience, knowledge and understanding of working successfully in an inner-city environment, preferably within the voluntary sector.
- Track record of more than five years strategic and senior operational management experience including experience of working with or reporting to a Board.
- Experience and understanding of community engagement and development.
- Successful record of deploying financial and staff resources effectively.
- Experience of marketing and fundraising and other income generation from multiple sources.
- Experience and knowledge of working on commercial (e.g. insurances and contracts), legal, commercial property, Charity administration, and investment matters.
- Experience of analysing and reaching conclusions on complex written and numerical information, including accounts, business plans and budgets.

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent written, verbal and interpersonal skills with the attributes necessary to achieve credibility at all levels.
- Entrepreneurial and innovative approach with an ability to identify and act upon opportunities.
- Able to develop good partnerships, relationships and links with others and an ability to exert positive influence with all stakeholders.
- Able to think laterally and creatively about funding opportunities and projects that reflect the Trustees' vision for the future.
- Excellent planning, organisational and problem solving skills with the ability to develop new approaches.
- Well organised, able to prioritise work for self and others with an understanding of the importance of detail.
- Highly developed sense of personal integrity, embracing the ethos and the culture of the organisation and the community.
- Drive and energy to motivate and enthuse others to work collaboratively and to be confident embarking on new projects and opportunities.

Terms of appointment

Job title:	Chief Executive
Salary:	Between £95,000 - £105,000 per annum
Location:	St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London EC1V 8AJ
Line managed by:	The Chair of the Board
Hours:	37.5 hours per week (full-time, permanent); a high degree of presence is required both at the Centre itself and across the local community
Holiday entitlement:	typically 34 days per annum (inclusive of bank holidays)
Pension:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will join the St Luke's Parochial Trust Stakeholder Pension Scheme (Legal & General) upon successful completion of probation• You must contribute a minimum percentage of your gross salary, deducted at source; St Luke's will match at the current employer contribution rate (details from the Executive Assistant).• Contributions apply only to gross salary, not overtime or other payments.• You may opt out or re-join at any time, with backdated employer contributions available upon request.• St Luke's will contribute 7% of gross salary if the employee contributes 4%.
Other benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership of Benenden Health• Subsidised lunches at St Luke's for permanent and temporary staff• Cycle-to-Work scheme for bike purchase/hire• Interest-free season-ticket/Oyster Card loans (up to £2,000 or 15% of salary) for rail or bus travel• Training & development: support for agreed professional training costs and reasonable revision time

How to apply

If you would like to apply for the CEO role at St Luke's Community Centre, please send the following:

- An up-to-date CV outlining your employment history, academic and professional qualifications, and contact details
- A completed Registration Form
- A Supporting Statement (no more than 2 x A4 pages), which:
 - Demonstrates how you meet the criteria outlined in the Person Specification
 - Explains your interest in becoming the CEO of St Luke's Community Centre

Please submit your completed application to **executive@harrishill.co.uk** to arrive by **9 am on Monday 10th November 2025**.

Timeline

- **Monday 10th November 2025**
Applications close
- **Week commencing 17th November 2025**
Shortlisting meeting
- **Week commencing 24th November 2025**
First-stage interviews
- **Week commencing 1st December 2025**
Second-stage interviews
- **March 2026**
Start date for new CEO, with a 7–10 working-day handover period

Please state in your application if you have any commitments during the interview period that may coincide with these dates, or if you require any special provisions should you be called forward for interview. For any queries or to arrange a confidential conversation, please contact **Jenny Hills at Harris Hill** (executive@harrishill.co.uk) with your availability.

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Chief Executive Officer – St Luke’s Community Centre

Location: London EC1V (on-site presence required)

Salary: Between £95,000 - £105,000 per annum

Contract: Permanent, full-time (37.5 hours per week)

Are you ready to guide St Luke’s Community Centre - south Islington’s 500-year-old community hub - into its next era of intergenerational community impact?

About St Luke’s

St Luke’s Community Centre traces its roots back over 500 years, stewarding ancient parish endowments to relieve poverty in our defined area of benefit. In 1982 we opened our purpose-built home on Central Street. In 2019 we transformed from an over-55s’ welfare organisation into a vibrant, intergenerational hub. Our programme of over 100 weekly activities has grown year-on-year, and we’ve become the first organisation in Islington to achieve the trusted standard benchmark. Our already strong reputation was bolstered by our team’s incredible response to the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic, during which we never closed, but pivoted to preparing daily meals, running befriending calls and welfare checks, and welcoming the community back in as soon as it was safe to do so. Today, we are the beating heart of the community,

As our next CEO, you will:

- **Shape Strategy & Impact:** Lead development and delivery of our three-year rolling strategy, balancing service excellence with financial sustainability.
- **Governance & Finance:** Oversee robust governance frameworks and financial controls, stewarding our £20 million investment portfolio, trading income and grant programmes.
- **Operational Leadership:** Inspire and support a diverse team of 44 staff and hundreds of volunteers, embedding a culture of continuous improvement, inclusion and professionalism.
- **Income Generation:** Unlock new revenue streams - maximising room hire, cookery-school capacity, digital/social enterprises and corporate fundraising partnerships.
- **Community & Partnerships:** Forge and deepen relationships with local authorities, corporate sponsors, umbrella bodies and community groups.
- **Brand & Profile:** Be the public face of St Luke’s, elevating communications, safeguarding our reputation and ensuring our values of inclusion, equality, friendship, wellbeing and support shine through.

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Who you are

- A seasoned senior leader (CEO or equivalent), ideally within the charity, membership or community-services sectors.
- Demonstrable expertise in strategic planning, P&L management and complex stakeholder governance.
- A persuasive communicator and boardroom presenter with the gravitas to inspire trustees, staff, volunteers and funders.
- Entrepreneurial and innovative, able to identify revenue opportunities and drive their delivery.
- Hands-on and approachable - a visible presence on the shop floor as well as the board table.
- (Desirable) Experience of trading-arm management, social-enterprise models or corporate fundraising.

Why St Luke's?

- Lead a historic, 500-year-old charity with a modern purpose-built centre at its heart.
- Salary between £95,000 - £105,000 plus generous employee benefits (Benenden health membership, pension, season-ticket loans, cycle-to-work, subsidised lunches).
- Shape a charity whose community-shop, wellbeing hub, cookery school, employment hub, lunch club and gardening projects touch hundreds of lives each week.
- Join a committed Board, supportive Chair and passionate team determined to grow St Luke's impact in challenging times.

If you would like to receive an Information Pack for this role with details on how to apply, please send an expression of interest and (optional but appreciated) a CV or professional profile in confidence to our consultant, Jenny Hills at executive@harrishill.co.uk. For an informal and confidential conversation about this position, please contact Jenny at the above address with suitable times to speak.

Closing date for applications: 9am, Monday 10th November 2025

As leading charity recruitment specialists and a certified B Corp, Harris Hill is committed to high and ever-improving standards of equitable and inclusive recruitment. We actively welcome applications from all sections of the community regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexuality and other protected characteristics

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