

# Welcome to Pilotlight

Finance Manager  
Application Pack

February 2026

**pilotlight**



**We exist to facilitate and promote the sharing of professional skills to promote learning and enable charities to help more people.**



# Thank you for your interest in working for Pilotlight

We are a dynamic charity on a mission to facilitate and promote the sharing of professional skills to help charities help people most effectively.

We believe in a world that is fairer and more sustainable because charities, wider social enterprises and inclusive businesses have the skills that they need to tackle disadvantage.

Since 1996, we've helped over 1,000 charities ignite change that lasts, and we have ambitious plans for the future.



We'd love you to join our team.

**Lisa Pearce, CEO**

# Our story

*"I wanted to bring new people to the table."*

is how Jane Tewson CBE, a celebrated social entrepreneur, describes her decision to set up Pilotlight in 1996.

It was, in many ways, a similar spirit to her earlier achievement of co-founding Comic Relief from a refugee camp in Sudan to bring new money into the charity sector.

And a decade later, she co-founded Pilotlight to bring new skills into the sector.

The purpose of the organisation was sealed in the name. As Jane says, *"Pilotlight means igniting other flames; being a catalyst, bringing things together and letting them go."*

Nearly 30 years later we're still amplifying the impact that charities, businesses and individuals can bring to the world.

## Our mission:

*'To facilitate and promote the sharing of professional skills to help charities help people most effectively'*

## Our core values:

- We bring people together
- We believe in potential
- We expect the best

Pilotlight is an innovative, commercially focused social enterprise and as a Registered Charity, it operates within a robust governance and regulatory framework.

Pilotlight has a core team of talented staff drawn from a wide range of industries and sectors, all of whom are focused on maximising return from the partnerships we facilitate between business and charities.

We have a diverse pool of experienced delivery associates who provide on demand support and our highly qualified Board of Trustees ensures strong oversight and challenge.

# Amplifying impact

We exist to amplify the impact that charities, business and individuals can bring to the world.

We do it by bringing charities together with business and business experts who can tackle the pressing issues charities are facing. We manage the relationship between them to maximise the impact they bring. We help individuals apply their expertise to those who need it, and to grow their own skills as part of a team of advisors.

We increase the impact of individuals by bringing them new experiences and learning. We increase the impact of business by exposing their talent to new situations and challenges. We increase the impact of charities by giving them the expertise and resources they need.



As a result, we amplify the good work that's done in the world.

# Business as a force for good

We fundamentally believe that business can be a force for good in the world. Through our strategic partnerships with business, we amplify their potential to create a more inclusive and equitable world.

Our skilled-volunteering and experiential learning programmes develop employees whilst they give back to society. In the process, we achieve impressive results both for business and the charity sector.

By supporting 'for-impact' organisations in this way, employees hone existing skills, practice new ones and develop fresh perspectives, which they will bring back to their roles.

These experiences not only enrich day-to-day work but extend far beyond, creating a win:win:win: for employees, for business and society at large.



Morgan Stanley



BLACKROCK



# What difference are we making?

## Our activity and reach in 2024

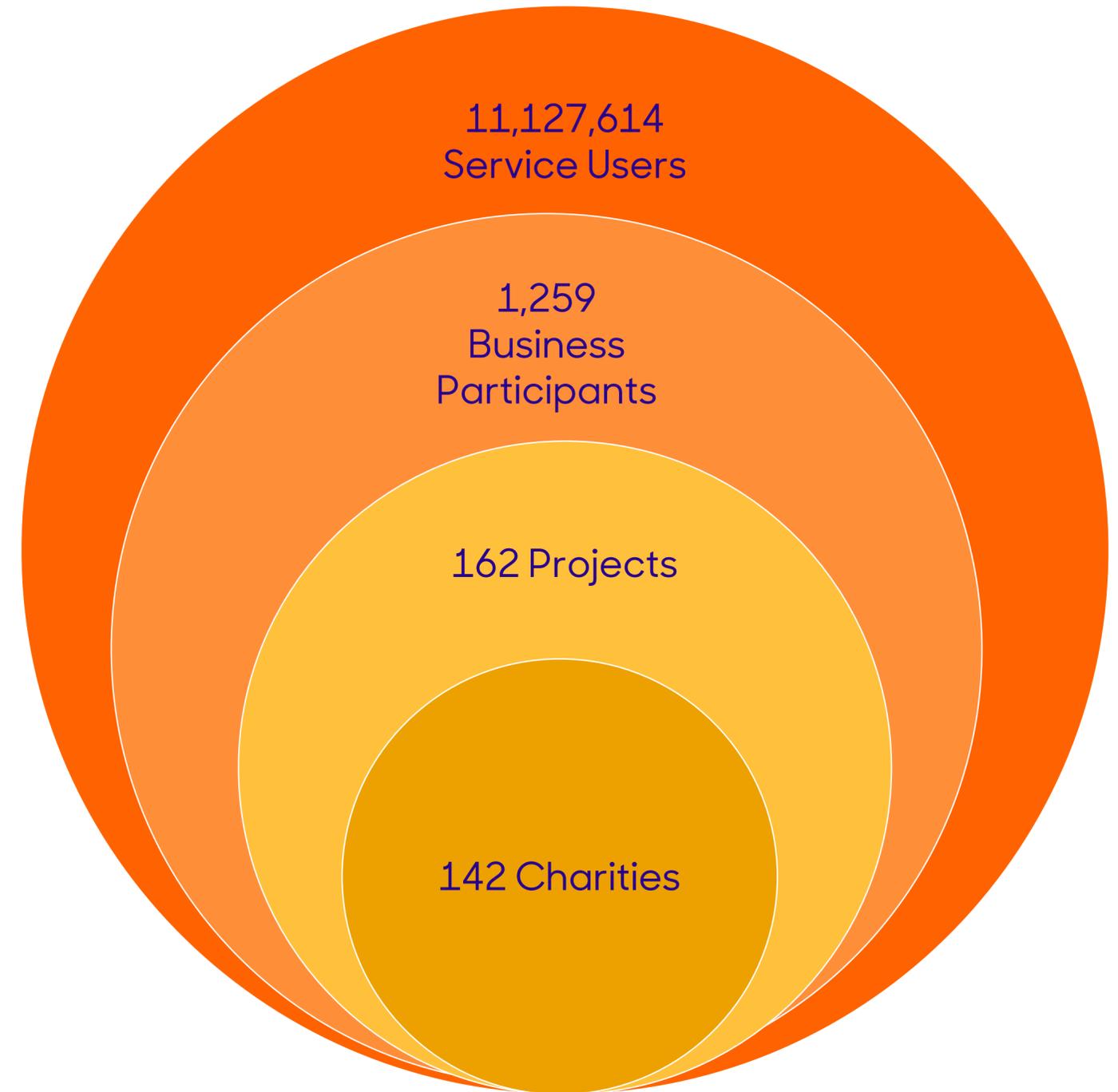
In 2024, Pilotlight worked with **1,259** business participants on **162 projects**, delivering support to **142 unique** charities.

In turn, these charities support over **11 million people**.

This has been a record-breaking year for Pilotlight in terms of the number of business participants – our ‘Pilotlighters’ – we were able to engage.

Four out of five business participants (78%) reported that as a result they were more confident in applying their expertise in new ways.

Since it was founded, Pilotlight has delivered **1,588 projects** to **1,323 charities**.



# How we do it



# Our programmes

Our programmes are not one-size-fits-all solutions.

We have a range of programmes depending on the type of organisation we're working with and the situation they find themselves in.

Each programme sees a dedicated team of business experts - we call them Pilotlighters - come together to give them focused, individualised support.

Our highly experienced Delivery Team are there every step of the way, so charities are totally supported while business and individuals know they are giving back more effectively.

We share some results from the programmes on the next few pages as an example of the kinds of results the programmes achieve.



## Developing confidence and trust at board level

Croydon Mencap was established in 1952 to support local people with learning disabilities and their carers.

Alan Avis, CEO reached out to Pilotlight for help to define a development strategy and to develop the charity's Board.

Through Pilotlight 360, we gave Alan the tools he needed to be able to free up a deadlock at board level that was holding the charity back. Viewing a short-term deficit in the charity's reserves as an investment was key to changing attitudes to risk.

Two years since the programme, the staff team has grown, turnover has increased by 27.5% and the charity has merged with a smaller charity in danger of closing.

Read more case studies [here](#).



*"I see now that we reached out to Pilotlight we really reached out for permission to trust ourselves."*

**Alan Avis, CEO, Croydon Mencap**

# Finding a secure future for homeless people in Edinburgh

Rowan Alba supports some of the most vulnerable people affected by homelessness in Edinburgh. As a provider of supported accommodation, the charity's most significant challenge is securing good quality accommodation in Edinburgh. CEO Helen Carlin came to Pilotlight Direction to explore a suitable investment model to buy accommodation and attract new investors.

The Pilotlighters reviewed the viability of Helen's investment model, researched and scoped out risks, and helped to identify the charity's unique selling point.

Since the programme Helen has built on the Pilotlighters' recommendations.. She's established a community benefit society, which will purchase a property to provide long-term accommodation for former homeless people.

Read more case studies [here](#).



*"The process was very useful for me. I was led to question my assumptions around different possibilities for our future."*

**Helen Carlin, CEO & Founder, Rowan Alba**

# Growing services for Volunteer it Yourself

Volunteer It Yourself is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company working with young people aged 14-24 who are not in education, employment or training.

The charity came to Pilotlight Insight looking for support on the most effective way to expand its operations nationwide.

The Pilotlighter team produced an extensive 'process map' to help the charity. After careful analysis and evaluation, the team concluded that a hybrid approach would be the most effective.

This approach allows flexibility and supports growth across a broad set of funding partners nationally.

Read more case studies [here](#).



*"The input we have received from the Pilotlighters has been invaluable. It's helped guide our thinking at such a critical time for us."*

**Tim Reading, CEO, Volunteer It Yourself**

# What is it like to work at Pilotlight?



# Our culture

We have a wonderful workplace culture, proven by the results of our Staff Survey, which is anonymous and independently run.

- **100%** of staff say they value the flexibility they have to carry out their role
- **95%** of staff say they are motivated by what Pilotlight wants to achieve
- **95%** of staff say there is someone they can go to if they have a problem
- **91%** of staff say they are treated with fairness and respect
- **86%** that we do a good job in promoting equality and diversity.

# Our values

Our values and behaviours guide the way we work both as a team, and with our Partner Charities and Businesses.

## Our values are:

- We bring people together
- We believe in potential
- We aim high.

## Our behaviours are:

- Welcoming – we are friendly, inclusive and supportive
- Collaborative – we are able to achieve more by being diverse and working together
- Nurturing – we build strengths in ourselves and others and support others to do more
- Open – we are flexible and entrepreneurial, embracing change
- Inspiring – we encourage people to raise their sights and ambitions
- Tenacious – we persevere, pursuing our goals with method, rigour and determination.

# Flourishing at Pilotlight

We are a professional, talented, and friendly team, always striving to learn and grow. Each member of staff has the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of our work. We take pride in our work and our organisation, and we have big ambitions.

We offer a great learning environment, with training and development opportunities, as well as a flexible approach to work, supporting our staff team to be able to carry out their roles in the way that works best for them and us. We offer a generous holiday allowance, and other benefits such as enhanced pension provision, maternity/paternity/adoption/shared parental leave and pay and other perks through Perkbox.



# Our commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As a charity founded to make a better world, we share the common goal of tackling social disadvantage in all its guises. As a community of purpose, we strive to create ripples of positive impact every day. Over the last two years staff and trustees have been developing our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

We are a committed member of Inclusive Employers.

We are particularly interested in candidates from underrepresented backgrounds.



# Job Description



# Finance Manager

- Reporting to:** Chief Executive Officer
- Location:** Hybrid. Our main office is in Central London and we operate a Flexible Working Policy
- Starting Grade/Salary:** Level 3 – £40,000 annum (pro rata) + excellent benefits
- Contract Type:** Part time (2–3 days/week flexible), permanent

## Purpose of the role

As we implement new digital systems, rebuild reserves and redesign our operating model, we require a professionally qualified Finance Manager to ensure robust financial management, strong governance, and high-quality reporting.

The Finance Manager will provide technical financial leadership within a small but high-performing structure, ensuring:

- compliance with charity accounting standards,
- strong financial controls,
- accurate management accounts and cashflow forecasting,
- high-quality Board and SMT reporting,
- a well-managed audit process, and
- real-time financial insight to support organisational decision-making.

The postholder will be the organisation's finance lead on Xero, ensuring the system is optimised and integrated into the organisation's digital transformation plans.

# Key areas of responsibility

## A. Financial Management, Controls & Reporting

- Produce monthly management accounts with full commentary, analysis, and recommendations.
- Provide quarterly financial packs for SMT and Board, ensuring clarity and accuracy.
- Ensure compliance with charity SORP, accounting standards and regulatory requirements.
- Deliver robust financial controls, risk management processes and audit readiness.
- Maintain an accurate, dynamic cashflow forecast used for operational planning.
- Lead month-end close, reconciliations, journals and internal controls.

# Key areas of responsibility (continued)

## B. Xero Financial Operations

- Serve as the organisation's Xero lead, expert and administrator.
- Ensure correct coding, allocation, reconciliation and financial data integrity.
- Manage bank reconciliations, supplier payments, and financial authorisation workflows.
- Support integration of Xero with new CRM/digital systems as part of transformation.

# Key areas of responsibility (continued)

## C. Budgeting, Forecasting & Decision Support

- Lead annual budget preparation and mid-year reforecasting.
- Provide scenario modelling to support strategic decisions (income diversification, programme costing, investment planning).
- Provide financial guidance for programme pricing and new business opportunities.
- Support teams to understand financial performance against budgets and forecasts.

# Key areas of responsibility (continued)

## D. Income, Grants & Programme Finance

- Track restricted and unrestricted income, ensuring compliance with grant agreements.
- Support Fundraising, Partnerships and Delivery teams with accurate and timely financial information.
- Develop project costing models aligned with the new tiered programme structure.
- Ensure financial processes support improved renewals, pipeline management and reporting.

# Key areas of responsibility (continued)

## E. Audit, Compliance & Governance

- Lead preparation of year-end accounts and schedules for external audit.
- Maintain and update financial policies, procedures and risk controls.
- Ensure all statutory returns and filings are completed accurately and on time.
- Present finance information clearly to SMT, Board and committees.

# Key areas of responsibility (continued)

## F. Continuous Improvement & Organisational Development

- Strengthen financial literacy across the organisation to improve decision-making.
- Simplify and modernise finance processes to support agile, sprint-based working.
- Ensure financial workflows align with new digital systems, user journeys and organisational structure.

## Key Deliverables (First 12-18 months)

- Clean, accurate month-end reporting delivered consistently.
- Improved financial dashboarding and greater insight for SMT and Board.
- A fully updated, compliant, and streamlined finance policies and controls framework.
- Robust forecasting and scenario modelling supporting the 2026 Operating Plan.
- Successful, well-prepared external audit with strong governance assurance.
- Fully optimised Xero setup, including integrations with new digital infrastructure.
- Strengthened financial compliance related to grants, contracts and income streams.

# Experience and Competencies

## Professional Qualifications

### **Essential**

- Fully qualified accountant: ACA, ACCA, CIMA or equivalent.
- Evidence of ongoing CPD and professional integrity.

## Experience

### **Essential**

- Experience as a Finance Manager or equivalent senior finance role.
- Strong financial and management accounting experience, including month-end processes.
- Advanced experience using Xero for full-cycle financial management.

- Experience preparing year-end accounts and managing external audits.
- Experience in small/medium charities, social enterprises or organisations with mixed-income models.
- Experience implementing or improving financial controls and governance.

### **Desirable**

- Experience with charity SORP and restricted income management.
- Experience contributing to business modelling, pricing or income diversification.
- Experience supporting organisations through change or digital transformation.

# Experience and Competencies

## **Skills & Attributes**

- High technical competence and attention to detail.
- Ability to analyse financial data and present insight clearly.
- Excellent communication skills, especially with non-finance colleagues.
- Strong organisational skills and ability to work independently.
- Proactive, solutions-focused and comfortable working in a fast-changing context.
- Trustworthy, discreet and committed to ethical financial management.
- Commitment to Pilotlight's mission and work.

# Person Specification Matrix

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
Fully qualified accountant (ACA/ACCA/CIMA)	✓		Application
Senior finance management experience	✓		Application / Interview
Charity SORP knowledge	✓		Interview
Experience preparing year-end accounts & managing audit	✓		Interview
Strong management accounting & month-end process	✓		Interview / Task
Advanced Xero experience	✓		Interview / Task
Experience strengthening financial controls	✓		Interview
Experience in small/medium charity	✓		Application
Business modelling / scenario forecasting	✓		Task / Interview
Experience supporting digital transformation		✓	Interview
Experience working in agile/sprint environments		✓	Interview
Ability to present financial data clearly to Board	✓		Interview
Strong analytical and commercial judgement	✓		Task / Interview
Commitment to ethical financial management	✓		Interview

# How to apply

If you'd like to apply for this role, send the following documents to [recruitment@pilotlight.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@pilotlight.org.uk) referencing the role title:

- Your CV
- A brief supporting statement outlining your suitability for the role

Pilotlight is committed to an equal opportunities policy. Please complete our [Diversity, Equity & Inclusion form](#) as part of your application. The information you provide will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application.

If there are extra steps we can take to adapt the recruitment process to ensure that it is inclusive for you, [please let us know](#).

**Closing date for applications: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March (17:00)**

## **Interview process:**

If you are successful, we may arrange a time to carry out an initial informal video call.

We will invite a shortlist of people to interview online on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March.

Second interviews may be held following that.

Applicants must have the right to work in the UK.

# Good luck with your application!

If you have any queries about the position,  
please [recruitment@pilotlight.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@pilotlight.org.uk)

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