

Welcome to Pilotlight

Head of Engagement, Communications & Digital
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

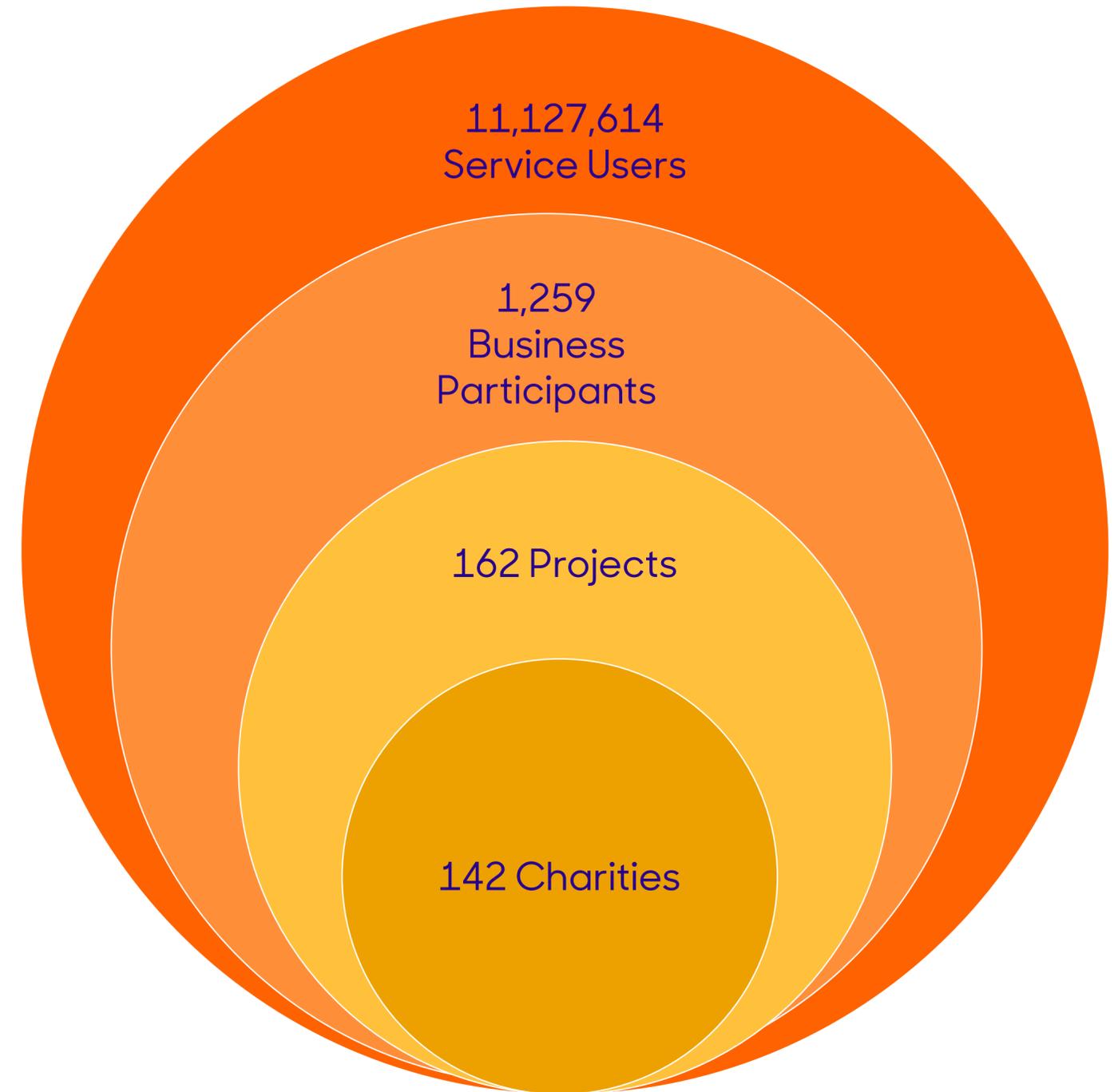
In 2024, Pilotlight worked with **1,259** business participants on **162 projects**, delivering support to **142 unique** charities.

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



Head of Engagement, Communication & Digital

- Reporting to:** Chief Executive Officer
- Responsible for:** Content and Communications Officer, Systems & Technology Manager, Service Operations Manager (and future roles as structure evolves)
- Location:** Hybrid. Our main office is in Central London and we operate a Flexible Working Policy
- Starting Grade/Salary:** Level 4/Senior Leadership, £competitive + excellent benefits
- Contract Type:** Full time, permanent

Purpose of the role

The Head of Engagement, Communications & Digital will lead Pilotlight's transformation into a visible, data-informed, digitally enabled national platform for learning, volunteering and charity support.

This role establishes the organisation's first modern, integrated MarComms & Digital function a key structural need identified in the Business Review and ensures Pilotlight can:

- Reposition itself in the market as a system-change leader.
- Deliver a unified, compelling brand and engagement strategy.
- Build and operate the digital infrastructure required for scale.
- Strengthen charity, partner, funder and volunteer engagement.
- Increase acquisition, conversion and retention across all audiences.

This role is central to delivering the 2026 Operating Plan's priorities on digital modernisation, marketing uplift, the 30th Anniversary campaign, sector-led growth, and unified outcomes storytelling.

Key areas of responsibility

A. Strategic Leadership & Ownership of Engagement, Communications & Digital

- Develop and deliver Pilotlight's first integrated Engagement, Communications & Digital Strategy aligned with the 2025–2030 Strategic Imperatives.
- Lead a modern, insight-driven approach to brand, engagement and digital experience.
- Establish clear leadership, role clarity and decision-making pathways in a previously fragmented area of the business, addressing the organisation's manager-heavy/leadership-light structure.
- Be accountable for cross-organisational engagement KPIs.

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

B. Brand, Reputation & Storytelling

- Reposition Pilotlight externally through compelling narratives that articulate impact, value and purpose.
- Lead the creative and communication strategy for the 30th Anniversary “You Are the Spark” campaign, ensuring it becomes a platform for increased visibility, engagement and income.
- Ensure the brand consistently reflects a modern, digital, scalable and national organisation.

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

C. Digital Transformation & Platform for Scale

- Co-lead (with IT and Systems Manager) the implementation of the new CRM, digital hub, workflows and online community platform, ensuring it meets user needs and strategic ambitions.
- Own digital user experience across charities, Pilotlighters, partners, and public audiences.
- Drive adoption and usage through best-practice content, onboarding journeys, engagement nudges and analytics.
- Ensure digital systems are fully integrated into engagement and impact workflows.

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

D. Marketing, Acquisition & Audience Growth

- Lead digital marketing, SEO, email automation, and social campaigns to generate:
 - Partner leads (corporates, funders)
 - Charity applicants for programmes
 - Skilled volunteer recruitment
 - Engagement with Pilotlighters, alumni, supporters and stakeholders
- Develop data-led audience segmentation and customer journeys, addressing current challenges around limited insight and inconsistent messaging.
- Workshops and events programme

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

E. Internal Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop internal communications that support culture, transparency and organisational alignment, including sprint updates, milestone sharing and leadership messaging.
- Work closely with SMT and Sprint Leads to translate complex change into clear communications.

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

F. Impact Communication & Evidence Storytelling

- Work with the Impact Lead to embed the unified outcomes framework into external communications and stakeholder reporting.
- Produce annual and thematic impact content, including the 30th Anniversary Impact Report.
- Ensure insight and data are used to drive strategic decisions and engagement.
- Lead of annual report creation

Key areas of responsibility (continued)

G. Team Leadership & Cross-Functional Collaboration

- Lead a growing team covering digital, marketing, engagement and communications.
- Embed sprint-based working practices and cross-team collaboration that supports the organisational redesign and reduces siloed working.
- Build capability, role clarity and leadership capacity across the function.

Key Deliverables (first 12-18 months)

Aligned to 2026 Operating Plan milestones:

Digital & Infrastructure

- CRM and Digital Hub launched and adopted across audiences
- Online community & learning ecosystem designed and implemented
- Digital-first journeys for charity, partner, volunteer engagement

Brand & Engagement

- Repositioned brand narrative and messaging hierarchy
- 30th Anniversary national campaign delivered with measurable engagement & income outcomes
- Consistent storytelling using unified outcomes

Key Deliverables (first 12-18 months) - continued

Aligned to 2026 Operating Plan milestones:

Marketing & Growth

- Acquisition model for charities, corporates and volunteers
- Sector-led campaign frameworks (aligned to Early Years, Disability, Youth, Communities, Health, Environment sectors)
- Digital analytics dashboards and KPIs operational

Internal Culture & Ways of Working

- Function fully established with clear accountabilities
- Sprint-based delivery embedded
- Strengthened cross-functional engagement with Partnerships, Delivery, Digital and Operations

Experience and Competencies

Experience

- Senior experience leading communications, marketing or digital engagement functions in a charity, social enterprise, membership, professional learning or mission-driven organisation.
- Proven ability to reposition brands, grow audience engagement and deliver multi-channel campaigns.
- Experience overseeing complex digital programmes (CRM, digital platforms, customer journeys).
- Demonstrated ability to translate strategy into delivery, particularly during organisational change.

- Track record of leading high-performing teams and developing capability across functions.
- Experience building communities, networks or learning platforms
- Strong experience using data, insight and analytics to drive decisions and measure success.

Desirable

- Understanding of the charity sector and skills-based volunteering landscape.
- Experience working in a sprint or agile delivery environment.

Experience and Competencies

Skills & Attributes

- Strategic thinker AND hands-on executor.
- Outstanding storyteller and communicator.
- Ability to influence across SMT, Board, partners and stakeholders.
- Collaborative, user-centred, evidence-driven.
- Comfortable leading in a fast-paced, rebuilding and transformation environment.

Person Specification Matrix

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
Experience			
Senior leadership experience in communications, marketing, digital or engagement	✓		Application / Interview
Experience building or leading an integrated MarComms & Digital function	✓		Application / Interview
Experience delivering brand repositioning, visibility campaigns or organisational storytelling	✓		Application / Portfolio
Proven success designing and delivering multi-channel engagement strategies	✓		Interview / Case Task
Experience overseeing CRM, website or digital platform transformation programmes	✓		Interview
Experience implementing or working within agile / sprint-based delivery models	✓		Interview
Experience working in a charity, social impact, learning or membership organisation		✓	Application
Experience developing communities, networks, or learning/engagement ecosystems		✓	Interview
Experience contributing to income generation via engagement, marketing or campaigns	✓		Application / Interview
Experience leading cross-functional teams and managing multiple specialist roles	✓		Interview

Person Specification Matrix

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
Skills & Knowledge			
Deep understanding of digital engagement, content strategy and user journey design	✓		Interview / Task
Strong understanding of data, analytics and insight-led decision making	✓		Interview
Excellent written, verbal and visual communication skills	✓		Task / Interview
Knowledge of brand strategy, creative development and narrative design	✓		Interview
Familiarity with CRM systems, marketing automation tools, and digital analytics	✓		Interview
Understanding of charity sector needs, partnership dynamics, and volunteer engagement		✓	Interview

Person Specification Matrix

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment method
Leadership & Behaviours			
Strategic thinker with ability to move between vision, design and delivery	✓		Interview
Confident, collaborative leader who can influence across SMT, Board and partners	✓		Interview
Ability to work at pace during organisational transformation	✓		Interview
Commitment to equity, inclusion and accessible communications	✓		Interview
Adaptability, curiosity, and resilience	✓		Interview
Commitment to building leadership capacity at all levels	✓		Interview

How to apply

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

- Your CV
- A brief supporting statement outlining your suitability for the role (2 pages maximum)
- Any relevant examples of campaigns or digital work (optional)

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: Thursday 5th 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 12th 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

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