

The difference we make

Skills Sharing Impact Report 2024

pilotlight



**155 charities x
1,059 business experts =
10 million people
helped**

When we amplify the best of ourselves, we can do so much more for our world.



Making a difference with skills

In the context of the dramatic challenges that our society faces, from homelessness and hunger to young people's mental health, the difference we make is simple. It is to make charity more effective and learning more hopeful.

We support a wide range of inspiring charities and in the process, we also benefit our skilled volunteers (our 'Pilotlighters') and their businesses, by helping them to develop and flex their own skills. It is a win-win-win.

Working in collaboration in this way, we have had a record year. We have engaged more people as skilled volunteers, from more businesses and supported more charity leaders than ever before.

The approach to making a difference that we have pioneered for 30 years now is winning wider recognition. Rather than accept the growing divisions in society and the economy, we look to bridge them.



Our formula is to make a difference with skills. We create a safe space for people to help out, learn and grow in an authentic way.

What we do is deeply collaborative, and I give my heartfelt thanks to all those involved.

Ed Mayo, CEO

Supporting charities to do more for our world



Another record year of support

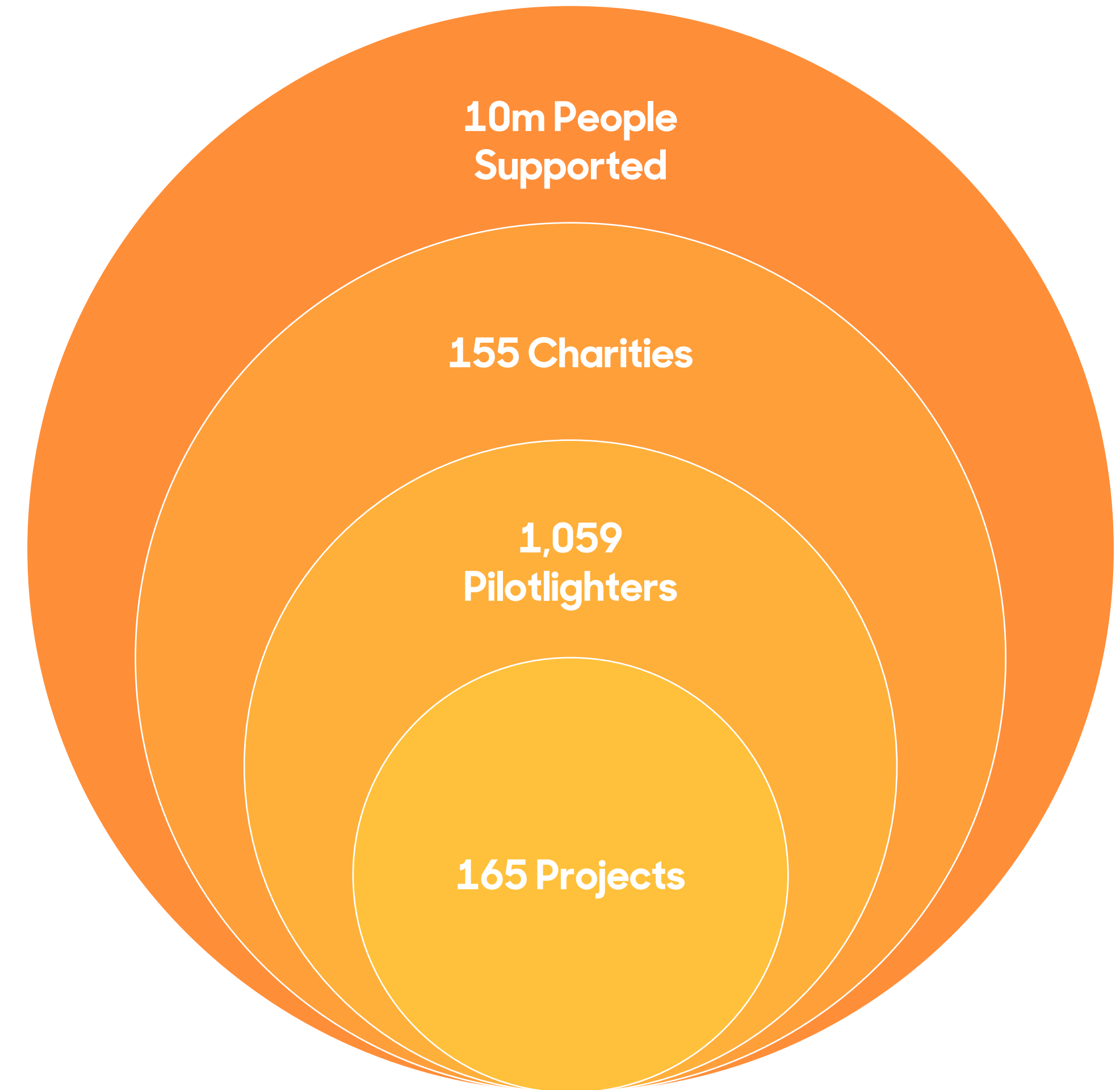
Our activity and reach

In 2023, Pilotlight worked with **1,059** Pilotlighters on **165** projects, delivering support to **155** unique charities.

Together, these 155 charities support 10,000,000 people.

This has been a record-breaking year for Pilotlight again, both in terms of number of Pilotlighters who participated and total number of projects.

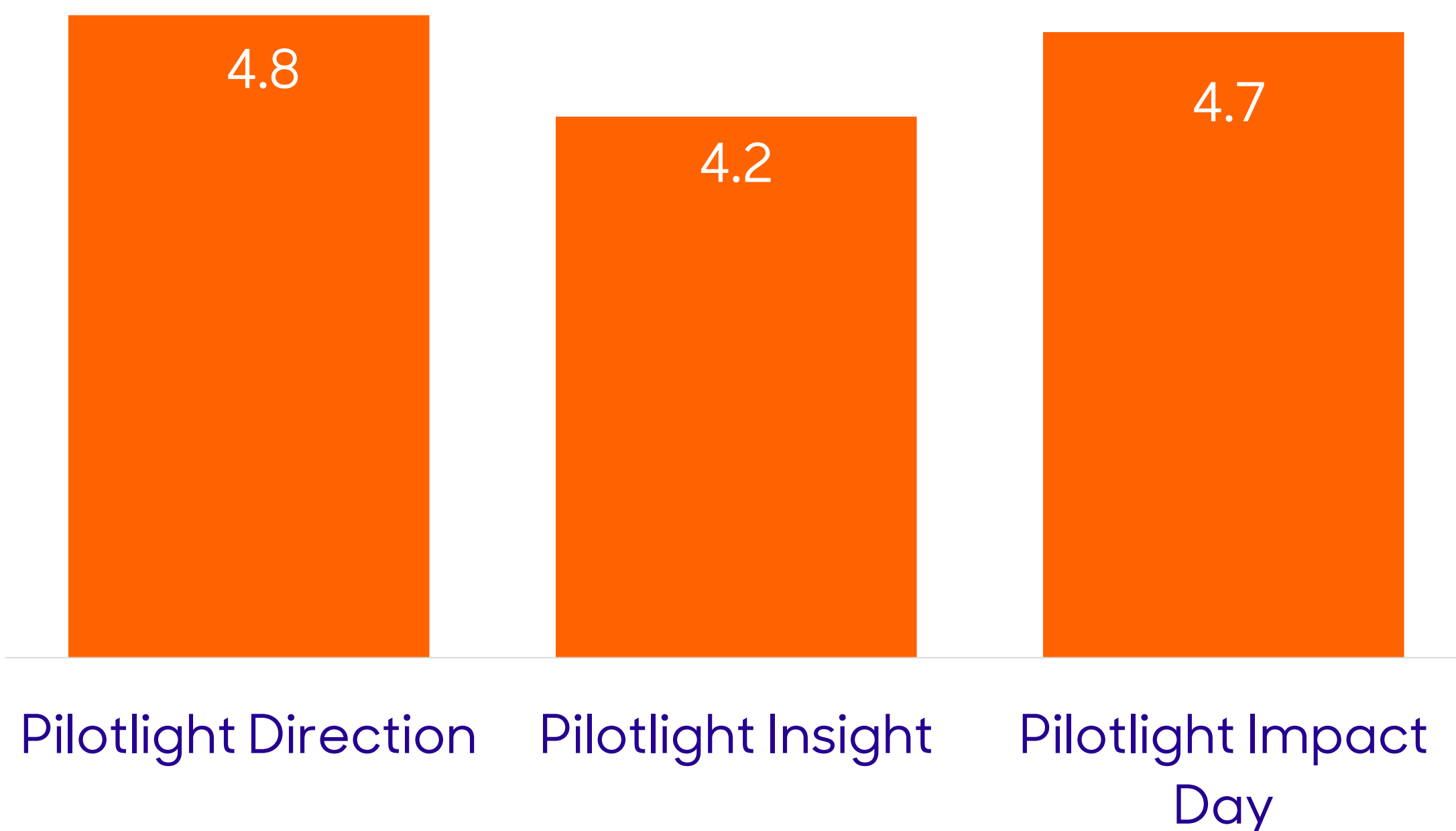
Since 1996, Pilotlight has delivered **1,426 projects to 1,181 charities.**



Results for charities

Pilotlight Direction, Pilotlight Insight & Pilotlight Impact Day

After completing these programmes, run in partnership with our Partner Businesses, charity leaders were asked to rate their satisfaction out of 5 with their experience:



"Now I can move forward with my plans full of confidence that we're heading in the right direction. For such a small organisation this is really valuable. We will regularly use templates provided and the work on tendering and the tendering process."

Anya Sanchez, Director, Growth Path (formerly KRT)

"The support was fantastic. It's been great to be able to use the advice and expertise as well as the reassurance from people who took the time to understand my charity and what we stand for."

Charlotte Throssel, CEO/ Founder, Disability Support – Nottingham

"To be able to go back and have full confidence in our plans to grow corporate support, following feedback from the Pilotlighters, allowed for a stronger pitch to recruit the additional team member required. And to have that recruitment approved and now a new team member in place and actively working on our plans, is massive. "

Lisa Morton, Head of Fundraising, SNAPS

Charity spotlight:

Helping SNAPS broaden its corporate supporters

SNAPS is a charity based in Leeds, with a vision to deliver better outcomes for children with additional needs by helping them make progress towards their personal goals.

SNAPS was looking to increase its income and support more children and their families. It came to *Pilotlight Impact Day* to understand how the charity could successfully engage a broad range of new corporate supporters.

The Pilotlighter team presented concise recommendations for SNAPS to implement. The alignment between their suggestions and SNAPS' initial thinking gave the charity the confidence to create a comprehensive business plan and accelerate the recruitment of a new Corporate Fundraising Manager. This newfound clarity and direction will enable this new manager to hit the ground running, armed with a clear roadmap for success.



"To be able to go back and have full confidence in our plans to grow corporate support, following feedback from the Pilotlighters, allowed for a stronger pitch to recruit the additional team member required. And to have that recruitment approved and now a new team member in place and actively working on our plans, is massive. "

Lisa Morton, Head of Fundraising, SNAPS

[Read the full case study on our website](#)

Charity spotlight:

Ensuring sustainability for Hijinx

Hijinx is a theatre company pioneering, producing and promoting opportunities for actors with learning disabilities and/or autism productions across Wales.

It also delivers training programmes to business sector staff in how to communicate effectively with people with learning disabilities and / or autism. The charity came to *Pilotlight Direction* for help on how to refine these training initiatives, broaden their reach and ensure their sustainability.

The recommendations from the Pilotlighters have served as a comprehensive roadmap for refining its client pitches and elevating the quality of its services. Hijinx has already yielded tangible results from implementing their recommendations: It has successfully launched online introductory workshops; confidently structured and costed; and is now developing a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote its training services effectively.



"Pilotlight Direction was a transformative experience. I left with a deeper understanding of our strengths, challenges and areas for improvement. The guidance from the Pilotlighters has significantly contributed to enhance the effectiveness of our business training initiatives."

Susan Kingsman, Head of Business Development, Hijinx

[Read the full case study on our website](#)

Results for charities

Pilotlight 360

In 2023, charity leaders rated the overall experience of Pilotlight 360 **4.7** out of 5.

At end of programme, they reported:

- **78%** increased confidence in their role
- **88%** increased leadership skills
- **69%** increased wellbeing.

Six months on,

- **92% of** charity leaders said the programme has had a positive impact on their strategic vision
- **92% of** charity leaders said it has positively impacted the effectiveness of their board.

Two years on from *Pilotlight 360*, charities, on average, **increase their reach by 12% and their income by 44%.***

"The value and input our Pilotlighters and the team at Pilotlight have added to our charity has been astronomical, and it's something we haven't found anywhere else.

It's been pivotal. Having the space and different viewpoint has allowed us to get out of tunnel vision within our sector and area. Now we are thinking in the bigger picture."

Emma Roberts, Director, Connected Perinatal

* These numbers are five year rolling averages

Charity spotlight: SELFA's seven-year triumph

In 2016 SELFA Children's Charity won a Weston Charity Award, which included a spot on Pilotlight 360. Emma Pears, Founder and CEO of SELFA reflects on the impact:

"In the seven years since Pilotlight 360, we've kept moving forward - our income has increased threefold, we now have diverse and secure funding streams as well as clear financial planning. We are reaching more children and families than ever before, branching into new areas of work around children's mental health and addressing health inequalities. All of this at a time when charities have been under more pressure than ever before, both financially and in terms of demand for our services.

"I'm not sure if we'd be where we are now without the Garfield Weston Foundation and Pilotlight, the intensive support led to a step-change to SELFA and helped us 'future-proof' our organisation for the challenging times we've faced since."



"I can honestly say that the year spent with Pilotlight was the most impactful time in my 20+ years career in the voluntary sector, we are still reaping the benefits of the opportunities that it brought many years later."

[Read the full case study on our website](#)

Bespoke programmes

Supporting charities authentically cannot work with a one-size-fits-all approach. Within all of our programmes, we carefully tailor the experience to give the best outcomes for all involved. However, if there's an even better way Pilotlight can support a charity or a Partner Business in achieving their objectives, we create a bespoke programme.

In 2023, we delivered three bespoke programmes. 217 Pilotlighters from two of our Partner Businesses worked to support 23 charities.

"We're clearer about the direction we want to go in now, after completing the Inclusive Leadership programme. I'm taking control and it feels good. I have a better understanding of where to place our resources. I learnt a lot and would like to thank the Pilotlighters for their time and expertise."

Dr Iyabo Fatimilehin, Company Director, Just Psychology

"The programme was fast-paced, creative, energising and highly enjoyable. It was impressive how quickly the Pilotlighters were able to understand the challenge and set about coming up with innovative and tangible suggestions to a range of different challenges facing our charity."

Michael Denton, General Manager, Advice Mid Wales

Charity spotlight:

Developing partnerships for Cycle Sisters

Cycle Sisters aims to support Muslim women to cycle by creating inclusive, accessible spaces to develop cycling skills, without compromising cultural or religious values.

The charity was exploring corporate partnerships as part of its strategy to diversify its income. Founder and Programmes & Partnerships Lead, Sarah Javaid, came to *Inclusive Leadership*, a programme we run in partnership with Barclays, to explore how to develop corporate packages and a compelling pitch for sponsorship.

Since the programme, the charity has developed a fundraising strategy and recruited a Communications & Media Lead. It's also formed several new relationships with corporates, such as with Brompton, enabling Cycle Sisters to offer free bike hire for participants of its annual 'Smiles & Miles'.



"Taking part in the programme was an incredibly useful experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to have some dedicated time out from the busyness of programme delivery to explore this really important area for our charity."

Sarah Javaid, Founder, Cycle Sisters

[Read the full case study on our website](#)

**How making a
difference benefits
those who give**



Pilotlighter Spotlight

Meet Sarah Cooper

"Little did I know that a seemingly simple email was about to change my perspective in a big way. It was from Pilotlight. Thanking their Pilotlighters, both past and present, for their contribution to the skills-based volunteering programmes they run in partnership with Barclays. And whilst reading it, the thought struck me that I actually had a lot to thank Pilotlight for.

"Myself, and a number of other colleagues joined the Pilotlight Insight programme. and that was how we were teamed and tasked with helping a mental health charity based in the North West – Listening Ear.

The work that it was doing was so different to our corporate roles, and we quickly realised how great it was to share our organisational and commercial skills, as well as business knowledge. This ultimately led to helping the charity get some direction with their digital journey.



After the project ended, I felt compelled to reach out to see if I could continue to support them in some way. So, in 2022 I started to shadow their board and helped with some risk management work, which led me to officially put in my papers to join the board as a trustee in 2023!

I am really excited about the journey I am on now, but it all started with Pilotlight matching me to Listening Ear – I don't think I would be on this path without you.

Sarah is a Senior Operations Manager at Barclays.

[Read Sarah's full story on our website](#)

Personal and professional outcomes for Pilotlighters

Across all our programmes in 2023, Pilotlighters reported increases in the following areas:

- **93%** reported being better able to see others' perspectives
- **75%** reported improvements in their own wellbeing

Developing collaboration skills is a key area we monitor for Pilotlighters on *Pilotlight Direction*, *Pilotlight Insight* and *Pilotlight Impact Day*. **80%** of Pilotlighters on these programmes increased their teamworking skills.

Developing listening skills is a key area for Pilotlighters participating in *Pilotlight Direction*, *Pilotlight Insight* and *Pilotlight 360*. **82%** of Pilotlighters on these programmes increased their listening skills.

On completing Pilotlight 360, Pilotlighters also reported:

- **80%** increased their coaching skills
- **64%** increased their leadership skills
- **64%** increased their professional networks.

"Being a Pilotlighter has given me a greater understanding of how charities work, the challenges they face and how they encounter the same day to day problems that commercial enterprises have; except they don't have the safety net of accessible funds when problems arise.

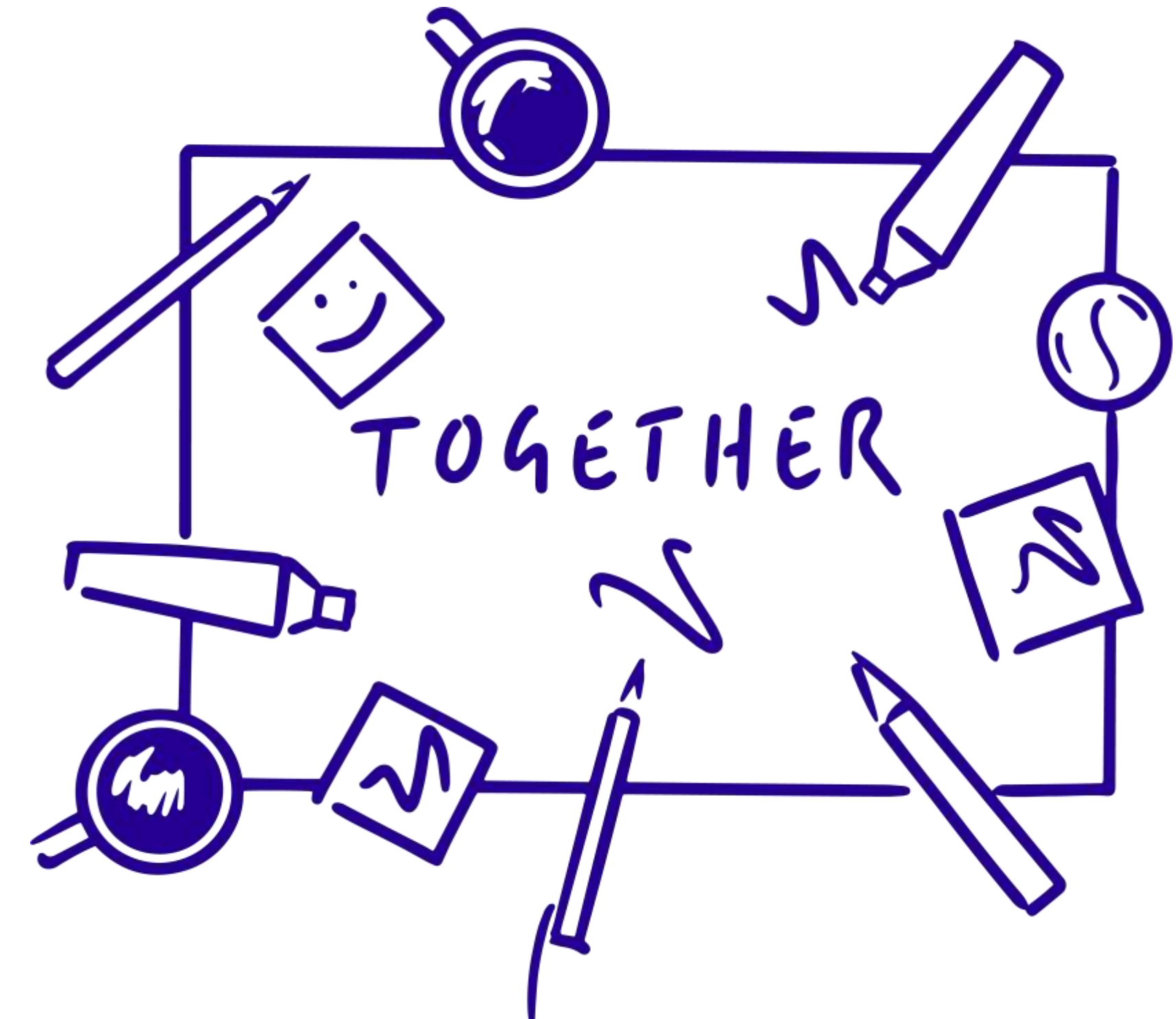
It's also been an invaluable learning experience working alongside other Pilotlighters and Trustees who bring in diverse perspectives and there's been a real sense of collaboration between us all."

George Theocharous, Finance Director

Stepping into the Learning and Development limelight

For decades, Pilotlight has harnessed the skills and talent of employees from some of the world's leading employers to take part in our experiential learning programmes that support charities. And whilst the social return on investment of our programmes is proven, we have been reluctant to position ourselves as a bona fide L&D provider. Why? Because we haven't fully understood the power of our programmes to affect change, for employees and business until now.

With hybrid working now the norm and more disruptive technology on the horizon, L&D teams have been looking to organisations like Pilotlight for support. Whilst we knew our programmes had a profound impact on those taking part, we often struggled to say how much we were 'shifting the needle' for the business, to borrow a phrase from a senior L&D leader working for a FTSE100 employer.



After a period of innovation, in 2023 we successfully launched our [Learning Framework](#), and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

This leaves us with only one question left to ask: Are you a L&D leader ready to give your people a new, real-time challenge? [If you are get in touch.](#)

A big thank you!

To all our Pilotlighters and Partner Businesses who have supported our work in 2023.

We couldn't have done it without you!

In 2023, our community grew to **1,059** Pilotlighters. Our highest annual level yet.

Over the year **30 Partner Businesses** worked with us to design and deliver programmes that were a win-win for both their business and the charities they supported.



Call for climate volunteers

Why climate action needs a practical new pro bono volunteering programme

pilotlight

Photo: The Conservation Collective
Pilotlight Partner Charity, 2021.

In 2023 we released a call for climate volunteers as our new research showed that 100,000 skilled pro bono “climate volunteers” are needed to accelerate environmental action in the UK.

Read the full report: [Together for climate action.](#)

In June this year, we announced a new partnership with Linklaters to support the [UK's first social impact programme for climate action.](#)

Thank you to everyone we've worked with



If we can help your charity or social enterprise [apply to our programmes for support](#).

If you would like to join our mission to help charities help people most effectively, either [personally](#) or [via your business](#) get in touch.

And our future impact?

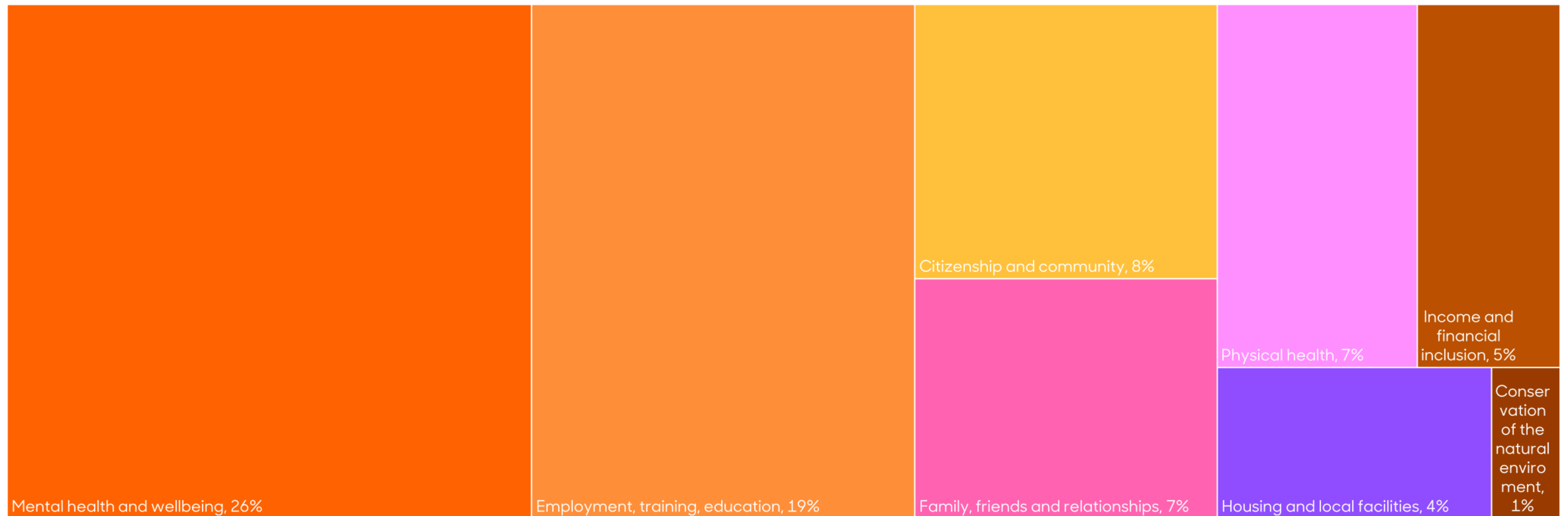
Over 2023, we have been reviewing our theory of change for Pilotlight, updating our data systems and rolling out a new Learning Outcomes framework. This will be reflected in next year's impact report.

Appendix



Partner Charity field of focus

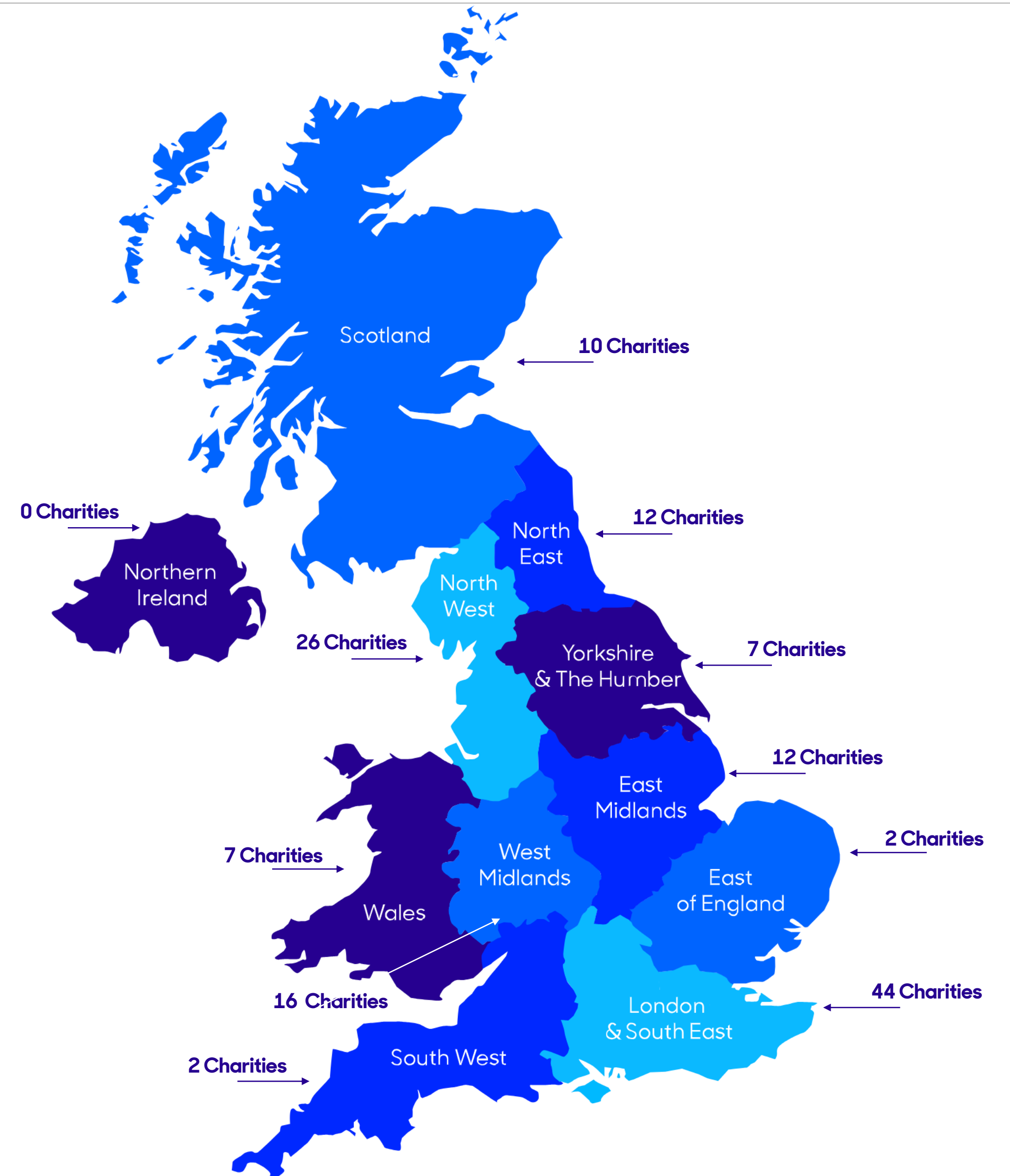
Of the Partner Charities we worked with in 2023, they focused on:



Where our Partner Charities were based

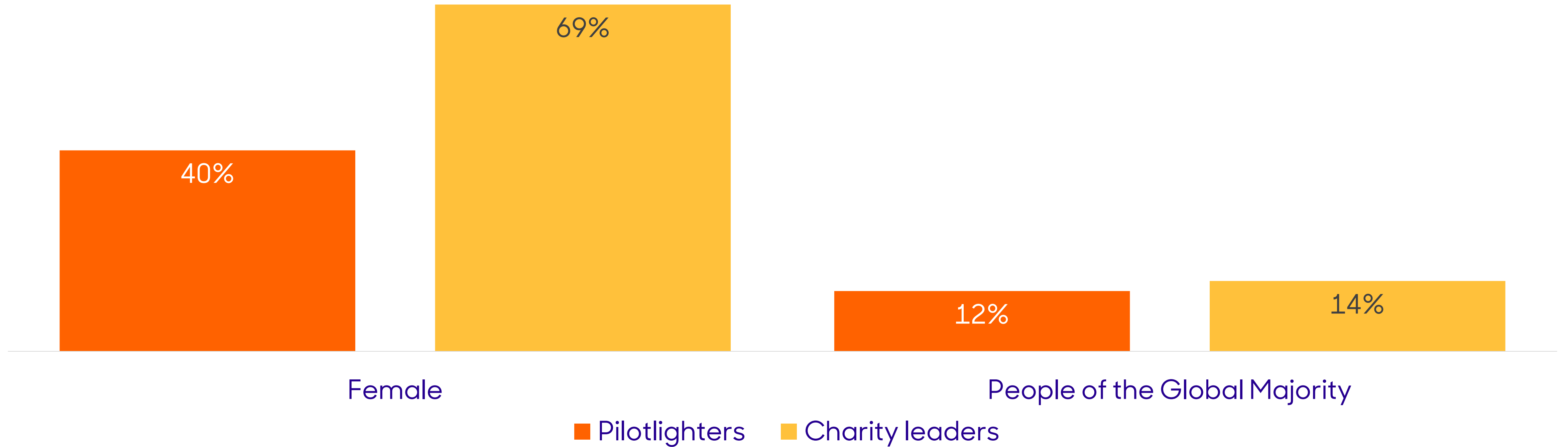
Of the 155 unique charities we worked with in 2023 the majority of 88 % (129) were based in England.

The regional spread of our work is assisted by our partnership with the Garfield Weston Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund in the Midlands.



Diversity monitoring

In 2023 our community was made up of:



**We bring together charities,
businesses and skilled
individuals. As a result, we
amplify the good work that's
done in the world.**

Pilotlight

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