



**PILOTLIGHT**

**IGNITING SOCIAL CHANGE**

IMPACT REPORT 2020





**We're on a mission to help charities help more people more effectively.**

**We want to create a world where charities and businesses work together to ignite social change.**

**Because great causes deserve great talent.**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Welcome to our 2020 Impact Report!

How can businesses, charities and social enterprises work effectively together to ignite lasting social change? That was the question at the heart of Pilotlight's inception.

From the beginning, we've pioneered a model that brings these worlds together in a mutually beneficial and transformative way. Now over 17 years later, with the commitment of more than 2,000 Pilotlighters and 190 businesses, this year sees us supporting our 1,000th charity. A number that's a great source of pride for us, yet also one that gives us pause to reflect.

Over the last three years we've been driven by a strategy to **innovate our offer**, **increase our reach** and **collaborate for impact**. Although we've increased and diversified our charity partners supported each year, this was never meant to be a growth strategy. This was a *change* strategy, where we embraced reinvention in order to create new opportunities in pursuit of our purpose.

This second curve for Pilotlight has seen us make pivotal changes to the ways we support charities via a range of new Partnership Programmes. These new programmes have enabled us to also broaden opportunities for Pilotlighters, and we now work with professionals across the career spectrum. We also sought out and have driven new collaborations, developing and improving ways of responding to the needs of our charity partners.

Therefore, in planning for this report, we had envisaged a more celebratory tone to mark the milestone we approach. However, over these last few months, like everyone else, we find ourselves trying to adjust to a 'new normal' as a result of Coronavirus. We anticipate demand from charities and social enterprises for our support only to increase. We are openly exploring new ways to operate in this new environment as well as where we can add the most value.

We take great pride in sharing our latest results and highlight just a few of the countless stories of how our community of charity leaders, Pilotlighters and our amazing staff team are working together to ignite social change across the country. I hope you enjoy it. Never has our purpose felt so important.



Bruce McCombie  
Interim CEO  
Pilotlight



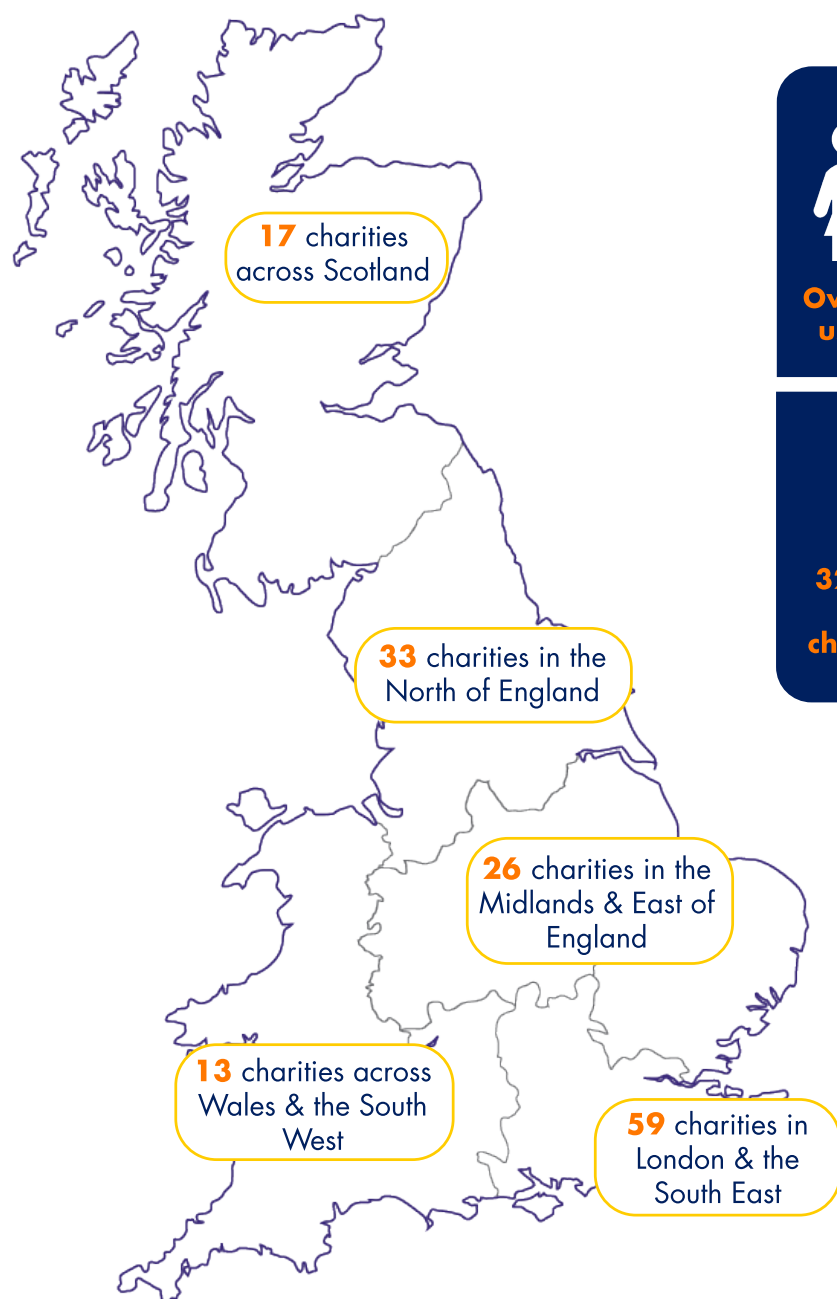


# 2019 SNAPSHOT

We champion small and medium sized organisations meeting the needs of their local communities. Every charity partner we work with tackles social disadvantage and we actively seek to support a broad range of causes.

We help charities thrive. By participating in our programmes, charities go on to increase their reach, diversify and increase their income, improve their governance, raise their profile and much more.

## 559 Pilotlighters supported 148 charities.



Charities income overview <sup>*</sup>	
Charities with an income under £500k	42%
Charities with an income between £501k - £1m	22%
Charities with an income between £1.1m - £5m	29%

<sup>\*</sup> Based on charities participating in the Pilotlight Programme





# **THE PIOTLIGHT PROGRAMME**

*Leaders learning from leaders*







# DEVELOPING CHARITY LEADERS

Over 10 - 12 months, a team of Pilotlighters work together with a charity leader and their board of trustees, to help them tackle the strategic challenges they face. Responsive to the charity's needs, the programme can work on any pressing areas of concern for the charity. The programme often looks at areas such as vision and mission setting, governance and leadership development, strategic business planning, away day planning/facilitation, income diversification and improved impact measurement.

By working closely with the charity leader the programme strengthens leadership, confidence and resilience, enabling them to move their organisation to the next stage in its development.



Pilotlight's support has been critical to our development and has been a catalyst for my new business mindset. Monitoring growth and having a clear action plan to implement allows me to be braver, and finally I can sleep!

**Charity leader on the Pilotlight Programme**

## Charity leaders completing the programme in 2019 reported increases in many key areas both personally and professionally, including:

# 90%

increased  
confidence in  
their role



**82% increased  
leadership skills**



**74% increased  
personal wellbeing**



# Ellie's Story



Pilotlight has helped me and the Chair realise we're on the same page.

**Ellie Coteau, CEO, Welcome Centre**

The Welcome Centre is a Food Bank Plus, based in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. It provides practical support to people in crisis, such as food, basic household items and toiletries.

The Pilotlight Programme gave CEO Ellie Coteau, and the Chair, Jeanne Watson, the time and space to clarify the charity's current strategy, and work together on it before discussions with the wider Board of trustees.

Since the charity completed the Pilotlight Programme, Jeanne and Ellie have gained the full support of the Board to lead the new strategy, and as a result, the trustees have become less operational.

Ellie has developed a new three-year strategic plan and the charity is in a healthier financial position. She feels more confident in managing the staff team, has developed an effective working relationship with Jeanne and the charity has a clear direction for the future.



# Further leadership development

Our Bursary Initiative provides an opportunity for charity leaders to further develop their skills by working alongside our Pilotlighters on the Pilotlight Programme. Now in it's third year, we've helped over 25 charity leaders across the country increase their knowledge and networks, both personally and professionally. They can then take this new learning back to their own organisation.



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Being a Bursary Pilotlighter has undoubtedly developed my skills as a leader, it's not simply been a case of me contributing to the support of another charity. It's made me reflect on my own practice, consider how I can be a more effective leader, and the variety of ways in which this is possible.

It's also become apparent that there's no 'one size fits all' solution to helping charities. However, there are some tried and tested strategies and rules of thumb that will assist you – and these are achievable for every leader no matter how large or small the organisation / project is that you're leading.

**Bursary Pilotlighter**

## Bursary Pilotlighters in 2019 reported increases in many key areas including:

**100%**

increased  
coaching  
skills



**66% increased  
career development**



**73% increased  
professional networks**





# TRANSFORMING ORGANISATIONS



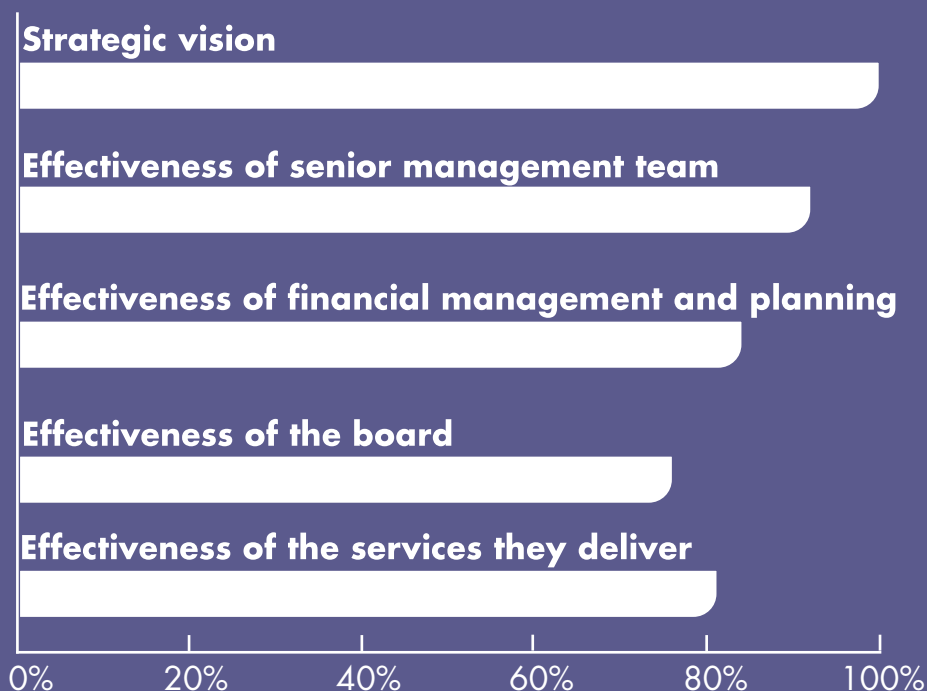
The clarity and the confidence to follow a business plan has meant our core work has a more structured approach. This work is reviewed every year and will continue to be done. We have since recruited a new board member, who is passionate about continuing this approach to our work.

**Charity leader on the programme**

Our charity partners tackle social disadvantage, addressing some of society's biggest problems. From supporting children with cancer, domestic violence survivors and those with physical disabilities, to fighting homelessness, drug abuse and social isolation.

By working with charity leaders and their boards, our Pilotlighters help them develop their strategic knowhow, so they can go on to increase the reach of their organisation, diversify its income, improve governance, raise its profile and much more. Ultimately, by building organisational resilience they can strengthen their ability to meet the needs of their beneficiaries.

**Two years after working with us, charity leaders report the programme has had a positive impact on the following areas:**



# Sarah's Story



The Pilotlight Programme exceeded my expectations and has been an invaluable process for me.

**Sarah Jones, CEO, Mencap Liverpool & Sefton**

Sarah Jones, CEO of Mencap Liverpool & Sefton, came to the Pilotlight Programme because she wanted help to make the most out of a prospective merger and develop a workable strategic plan. Although the merger initially looked like just taking over a building, it turned out to be more than that: the accompanying change meant the charity's structure needed to be explored as well as how this would change the staff culture. Responding to these developments, the Pilotlighters guided Sarah to think through how to rebuild and restructure the organisation to fit its new identity.

By the end of the project many issues hadn't been fully resolved. However, Sarah reflected that there was a much greater awareness within the organisation about where gaps were and how to address them going forward. The charity had gone through a crisis, and the support of the Pilotlighters had been crucial to managing this constructively.



**Two years after the programme, on average, charities have increased reach and income:**



**Increased reach  
by 36%**



**Increased  
income by 40%**



# THE PILOTLIGHTER JOURNEY

Being a Pilotlighter isn't just about developing charities. It's a transformative experience both personally and professionally. The programme creates a unique collaborative environment where senior leaders from the private and public sectors (and now the charity sector, thanks to our Bursary Initiative) learn more about how they can help charities, give back and develop their skills more broadly.



## Our Pilotlighters in 2019:



**45% were  
female**



**34% were  
members for 2+  
years**



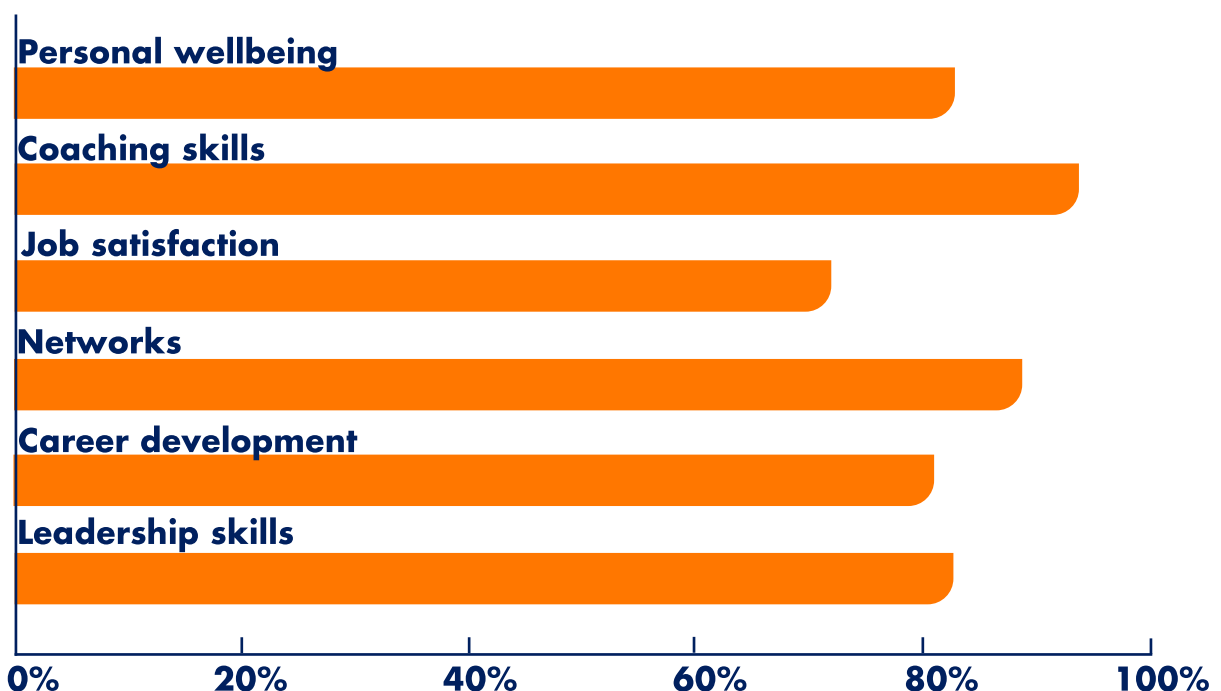
**45% were  
sponsored by their  
business to join**



After participating in the Pilotlight Programme I've massively increased my confidence in my ability to take on a board position, and my belief that my skills are relevant to a different sector. I now have greater understanding of the practical reality of the challenges faced by people at risk, and increased compassion for vulnerable people.

**2019 Pilotlighter**

## **Pilotlighters sponsored by their business to join, found increases in the following development areas:**





# Steve's Story



I became a Pilotlighter in 2009. With an eye on a future career as an effective Non-Executive Director (NED) I wanted to build my skills, and a trusted colleague recommended Pilotlight. I knew nothing of the charity sector, but it was emphasised to me that no prior knowledge was necessary.

## LEARNING TO LISTEN THE RIGHT WAY

Learning to ask the right questions and to listen without jumping to conclusions are valuable skills for any leader, and were things I grappled with, like many Pilotlighters, from the beginning. Now, having been a Pilotlighter for ten years, I hope I've learnt how to avoid rushing to provide 'helpful' advice that might actually be damaging, but I've been perfecting the art of listening ever since that first project.

## PURPOSE CHANGES EVERYTHING

I've been particularly impressed by the dedication and capability of charity leaders, trustees and staff in the 15 charities I've supported as a Pilotlighter. To see people so engaged in the mission of their organisation that they go the extra mile because they know they're having a positive, tangible impact on someone else is both moving and humbling.

## MY NEXT CAREER STEP

I'm now planning the next chapter of my career, hopefully as a NED and independent consultant, and an opportunity has arisen to develop greater board level skills by becoming the Chair of trustees of a small charity. I met Sara Bennett, the CEO of Balloons, a child bereavement charity in Exeter, through Pilotlight. The work of the charity and the team impressed me greatly, and the subject area was also close to my heart having lost a parent at a young age. When the current Chair of trustees indicated that he was stepping down I successfully applied for the role and took up the post in the summer of 2019. For me it feels like the end of one journey and I'm excited for this next challenge which puts purpose at the centre of the agenda.

## All Pilotlighters reported increases in a number of areas including:

**99%**  
increased  
knowledge of  
how to support  
charities



**92% increased interest  
in working with  
charities**



**Nearly 1 in 2 Pilotlighters  
became a trustee after 3+  
years of the programme**



# **ONE TO ONE PROGRAMME**

*Strengthening Leadership*







## STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP

Exclusively available to charity leaders who have completed one of our other programmes and experienced Pilotlighters, this programme provides a person-centred approach to leadership development.

In line with our coaching and mentoring model, the programme is an opportunity for a charity leader to be mentored one-on-one by an experienced Pilotlighter. The sessions are flexible and responsive to the charity, subjects can include: continuing professional advice on business plans and strategy, support with particular problems or difficulties arising in the work environment, or how to cope with an evolving role as an organisation grows.

The goal is to support charity leaders to put the plans developed during the Pilotlight Programme into action, whilst continuing to strengthen their leadership skills.

In 2019 **12 charity leaders** were supported by our One to One Programme.



The Pilotlighter I was matched with adapted the sessions to my needs as the support I needed changed.

Through the sessions I've understood the need to slow down and become more focused and to think carefully about behavioural triggers and my motivations.

**Charity leader participant on the One to One Programme**



# **PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES**

*Harnessing talent at all levels*







The programme has had a huge impact and the recommendations will form the basis for delivering increased service capacity. It will profoundly impact on the lives of our service users. It will also form a blue print for repeat projects, so the impact could be endless.

**Charity leader, participant on a Partnership Programme**

Our Partnership Programmes are short, focussed engagements designed to harness the skills of teams of Pilotlighters. Working collaboratively, they tackle and solve a carefully scoped specific issue a charity is facing. Typically 2 - 3 months in length, these programmes vary from light-touch through to intensive engagements.

Seen by our Business Partners as both Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and Learning and Development (L&D) opportunities, teams of Pilotlighters are formed from across the talent spectrum. We carefully explore the charity's issue to decide which Partnership Programme is most appropriate. At the end of the programme, the charity may have benefitted from high level recommendations, through to innovative solutions backed up by detailed analysis, research and implementation plans.

## Partnership Programmes in 2019



**295 Pilotlighters  
supported 56 charities**



**9 programmes**



**4 business partners**

# Business Partner spotlight

*In partnership with*  **BARCLAYS**

We are proud to have been continually working in partnership with Barclays for over 10 years. We have designed and developed programmes which provide Barclays' employees with experiential learning and development opportunities, offering a unique insight into working successfully with charities and into key social issues. The programmes have also enabled Pilotlight to increase the number of charities we support and address their needs in new ways too.

In 2019 the partnership supported 18 charities through two Partnership Programmes working with different levels of staff.

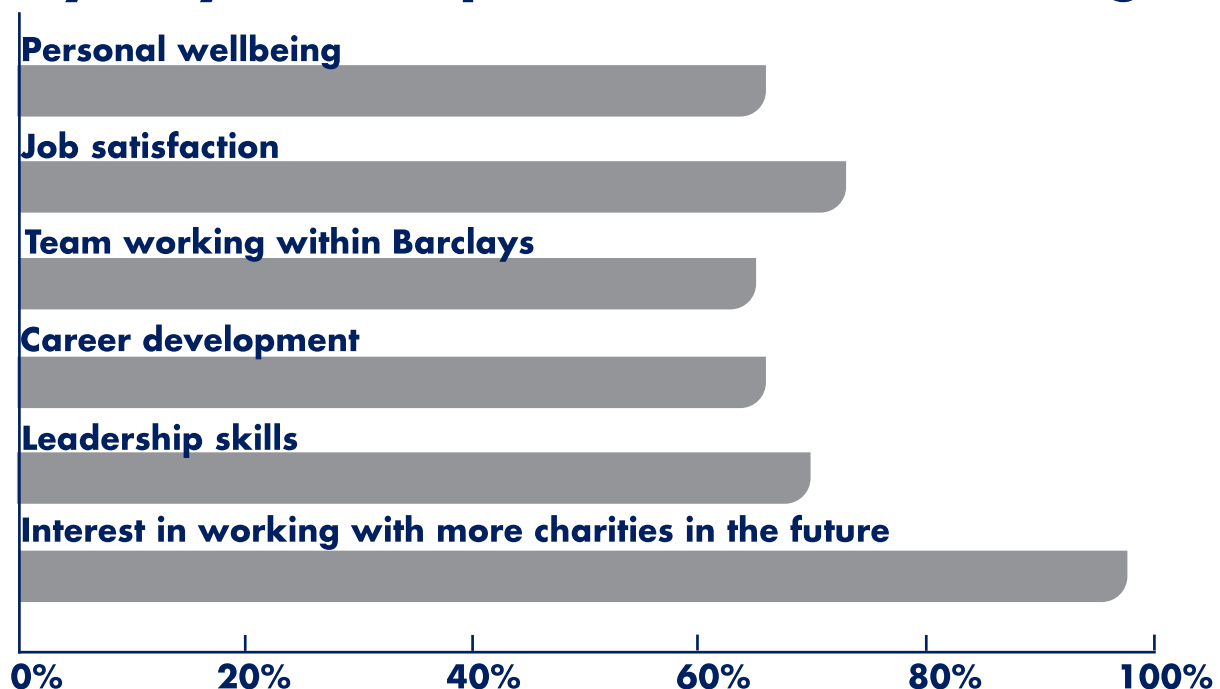


The programme gave me an insight into how a non-profit functions. It's improved my skills in exploring issues in plain language, and using tools such as SWOT analysis to illustrate points rather than just using numbers.

**Pilotlighter, participant on a Barclays' Partnership Programme**



## Barclays' Pilotlighters reported increases in many key development areas including:





# Tim's Story



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

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

Volunteer It Yourself is a not-for-profit CIC (Community Interest Company) working with young people aged 14-24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Since 2011, over 8,000 young people have participated in more than 500 projects.

Tim was looking for support to understand the most effective way to expand its operations nationwide. Through Unlocking Insights (a Partnership Programme with Barclays), the team produced an extensive 'process map' for the charity, which highlighted some key areas it could investigate to improve efficiencies. This included demonstrating which tasks were completed by several people within the central staff team, which could potentially be devolved to one staff member.

After careful analysis and evaluation of the organisation's structure, the team concluded that a hybrid approach to the organisational structure would be the most effective. This involves a part centralised, part functional and part geographical model. Most importantly, this approach allows flexibility and supports growth across a broad set of funding partners nationally.



## LOOKING AHEAD

We hope this report has given you a taster of our work and demonstrates both the firm foundation we have developed, and the social change we ignite. We remain committed to supporting local charities and social enterprises across the country despite the challenging times we all find ourselves in. We are proud to announce, at time of writing, that we've been able to support nine out of every ten charities we were working with before Coronavirus impacted all our lives and organisations.

In June 2020 we will welcome a new CEO, Ed Mayo, to the team, and this year also sees us coming to the end of our current three-year strategy. As a new strategic phase in Pilotlight's story beckons, we have no doubt that together, with our Pilotlighters and charity leaders, we will be able to rise to the challenges we meet and inspire further positive change, for charities and businesses.

May 2020

***Continuing to help charities  
help people more effectively.***

***Because great causes deserves great talent.***





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