

## CHARITY SECTOR RELEASE

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### **OPTIMISM AMIDST UNCERTAINTY FOR SMALL CHARITIES**

Small charities are optimistic about their prospects in 2019 despite increasing uncertainty. The majority (84%) of its leaders expect to maintain or increase organisational income in 2019 and over three quarters say they plan to help more people. However, this optimism does not appear to be borne out of stability for the sector, as two thirds report more uncertainty in their operating environments than in previous years. These findings, based on research amongst 371 sector leaders, appear in a sector insight report published today to mark the opening of applications to the Weston Charity Awards.

In 2014, the Garfield Weston Foundation established the Weston Charity Awards in collaboration with Pilotlight. In 2019, each of the twenty winning charities will benefit from a year of leadership coaching through the Pilotlight Programme along with £6,500 in unrestricted funding. Philippa Charles, Director of Garfield Weston Foundation said:

“Small charity leaders are under enormous pressure to steer their organisations through uncertain times. We are delighted to support those showing enormous creativity and resilience through these Awards and to help them reach their goals.”

Other highlights of the Weston Charity Awards Small Charity Leader Insight Report 2018/19:

- **Increased optimism** - Two in five small charities expect income to rise and around half expect to maintain current levels. Only one in eight forecast a drop in 2019 compared to a third at this point last year. Nearly four in five say they plan to help more people in 2019 compared to nearly three in five at the end of 2017.
- **Changing environment** - Four in five of charity leaders say local people provide good or excellent levels of support but most (82%) said they didn't get enough support from central government and nearly half said local government support was insufficient.
- **Challenges** - Well over two thirds of leaders said they had struggled to comply with new regulation and best practice over the past 12 months. Over a quarter of charities had to deal with the loss of a major funding source.
- **Job satisfaction** - Four out of five said they would recommend working for a small charity to a friend.

Gillian Murray, Chief Executive of Pilotlight, a charity that matches the Weston Charity Awards winners with business mentors for a year of strategic business planning support, said:

“Small charity leaders are versatile and know how to get things done under incredible pressure. In uncertain times, adaptability and flexibility are key. The strategic knowhow charity leaders gain through these Awards will help them navigate successfully towards a sustainable future.’

To read the Weston Charity Awards Small Charity Leader Insight Report in full visit <https://westoncharityawards.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Weston-Charity-Awards-Small-Leaders-Survey-2018-FINAL.pdf>.

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### Notes to editors

- 1. About the Weston Charity Awards:** The Awards celebrate and support great frontline charities working in the fields of community, welfare and youth. Run by the Garfield Weston Foundation with Pilotlight, charities with incomes under £5 million in the North of England, the Midlands and in Wales can apply. Applications open 3rd December 2018 and close 11th January 2019. To apply visit [www.westoncharityawards.org](http://www.westoncharityawards.org)
- 2. About the Weston Charity Awards Small Charity Leaders Insight Report 2018-19:** The Garfield Weston Foundation and Pilotlight conducted an online survey amongst 371 charity leaders in England, Wales and Scotland in October 2018. All worked for charities with incomes under £5 million. Charity leaders who responded were predominantly CEOs or Chairs. They were asked a series of questions on the challenges they had faced in 2018 and their expectations for 2019. To read the report in full visit <https://westoncharityawards.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Weston-Charity-Awards-Small-Leaders-Survey-2018-FINAL.pdf>.
- 3. About the Garfield Weston Foundation:** Celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2018, the Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded charitable grant-making foundation which supports causes across the UK with grants totaling over £60 million each year. 2018 also marks its £1billionth donation since it was established. One of the largest and most respected charitable institutions in the UK, the Weston Family Trustees are descendants of the founder and they take a highly active and hands-on approach. The Foundation’s funding comes from an endowment of shares in the family business which includes Twinings, Primark, Kingsmill (all part of Associated British Foods Plc) and Fortnum & Mason amongst others - a successful model that still endures today; as the businesses have grown so too have the charitable donations. From small community organisations to large national institutions, the Foundation supports a broad range of charities and activities that make a positive impact in the communities in which they work. Over 1,500 charities across the UK benefit each year from the Foundation’s grants. [www.garfieldweston.org](http://www.garfieldweston.org)
- 4. About Pilotlight:** Pilotlight is an award-winning charity that connects Pilotlighters (its business members) with charitable organisations, to unlock solutions that help charities become more effective and sustainable. Since 2003 Pilotlight has supported

over 700 charities and social enterprises tackling social disadvantage in the UK. Pilotlight's impact report 2018 shows that two years after completing the Programme, on average, charities have increased their turnover by 36% and are reaching 52% more people. For more information please visit: [www.pilotlight.org.uk](http://www.pilotlight.org.uk)

5. For further questions relating to the Weston Charity Awards or the Weston Charity Awards Small Charity Leader Insight Report 2018-19 including comparative data from 2017-18 and to arrange interviews or case studies, **please contact Vicky Hatchett on 07877 984367 or Julie Kangisser on 07711 818496.**

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