

YHA

Director of Finance & Performance

January 2026



Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Finance & Performance at YHA.

YHA is an organisation with a proud history and a powerful purpose. For over 90 years, we have believed in the transformative power of travel and adventure - particularly for young people and others who face barriers to accessing nature, the outdoors and shared cultural experiences. Today, through a network of around 120 hostels across England and Wales, we continue to welcome more than a million people each year and to play a distinctive role as a charity, social enterprise and national infrastructure organisation.

Like many mission-driven organisations, recent years have fundamentally tested our operating model. The pandemic, combined with sustained inflation and structural shifts in the market, has created significant financial challenges that require comprehensive transformation. We face these challenges with clarity and determination: we have a focused transformation strategy, executive leadership committed to change, and Board backing for the bold decisions needed to secure YHA's long-term future. This is a decisive period of renewal that will define YHA for the next generation.

We are now seeking an exceptional finance leader to join us. The Director of Finance & Performance role is central to YHA's recovery and transformation. This is not a traditional finance leadership post. We are looking for someone who combines rigorous financial stewardship with a strong performance and analytical mindset - someone who can bring clarity, insight and confidence at a time when decisions matter and pace is important.

This role will require you ensure confident banking relationships and covenant compliance through significant change and help us make evidence-based decisions about our network and operating model while maintaining operational continuity. The financial stakes are real - but so is the opportunity. We are seeking someone who is energised rather than daunted by this complexity, who sees the chance to genuinely save and reshape an organisation that matters, and who wants their finance leadership to be measured not just in financial outcomes but in mission impact preserved and strengthened.

Working closely with me, the Executive Team and the Board, you will play a critical role in strengthening YHA's financial foundations while helping us mature as a data-led organisation. You will lead our finance, performance management and business intelligence capability, ensuring that high-quality analysis underpins strategic choices around investment, asset optimisation, service delivery and organisational change. You will help us move from fragmented information to integrated insight - connecting financial performance, operational outcomes and mission impact in a way that supports better decision-making at every level.

Just as importantly, this is a leadership role that requires judgement, resilience and strong relational skills. You will be operating in a complex, multi-site charity with a deep sense of purpose and a wide range of stakeholders. You will need to challenge constructively, support colleagues through change, and build confidence and capability within your teams and across the organisation. Turning YHA around is not about cost control alone; it is about creating a sustainable performance culture that enables us to thrive.

We are therefore keen to hear from experienced finance leaders who see transformation as an opportunity, not a burden. You may come from the charity, public or commercial sectors. What matters most is that you bring credibility at senior level, a proven track record of financial leadership through genuine transformation, and the resilience to maintain performance while building something new. You will be someone who can hold urgency and optimism together - clear-eyed about the challenges ahead, while genuinely excited by the opportunity to help secure YHA's mission for decades to come.

If this role resonates with you, I hope the rest of this candidate pack gives you a strong sense of who we are, the journey we are on, and the contribution you could make. I very much look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

Louise Platt
Executive Director of Resources & Transformation



About us

We are YHA. We believe in the power of travel and adventure to connect people to each other, to nature and the outdoors, to culture and to heritage. Since 1930, YHA has operated a unique network of hostels throughout England and Wales - a community of shared spaces, open to all and for the benefit of everybody.

We provide inclusive adventures, in extraordinary buildings, in amazing places - welcoming over a million people each year. Yet we offer much more than accommodation.

YHA is a sector-leading residential provider, a champion of inclusive volunteering and work experience, and an Investors in People Gold employer.

We are a large social enterprise leading the way in sustainable social tourism and nurturing partnerships that deliver impact across multiple sectors and at every level – in our communities, in our regions, and nationally.

Over 90 years on from our pioneering beginnings, our founding principles and determination to achieve social good remain at the heart of what we do.

In the aftermath of the pandemic and context of multiple external crises we are forging ahead with our long-term strategy to increase the scale and breadth of our impact. Our business plan for 2023-26 is structured around recovery and growth through optimisation of resources and network change.

Join us and make your mark on this vital and energetic charity as we continue our journey towards prosperity and long-term sustainability for the benefit of present and future generations.

**We are YHA.
Because where you go changes who you become.**



Our Vision

Everyone has access to the benefits of adventure, for the first time and a lifetime.

Our Mission

To enrich the lives of all, especially young people, by providing brilliant hostel stays and experiences that improve physical health, mental wellbeing and life skills.

Our Charitable Object

To help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing youth hostels or other accommodation for them on their travels and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.

Our Heart Values

Helpful - Being helpful is about making life easier for other people, being hospitable and creating a pleasant work environment.

Efficient - Being efficient means being organised, thoughtful in decision-making, hardworking and committed to improvement. As a charity, it's our duty to make best use of our resources.

Authentic - Authenticity combines the qualities of honesty, trustworthiness, and transparency. It's about being genuine and straightforward.

Respectful - Respect is about valuing the time, energy, opinions, achievements and working styles of colleagues, volunteers, and supports. It's about promoting equality and inclusivity.

Team-spirited - YHA is one team. And for the health and success of the team, we take individual responsibility, show personal leadership qualities, and collaborate towards our goals.



Our Commitment to Diversity

As part of our 10-year strategy - 'Adventure. For the first time and a lifetime.' - we are ensuring that equity, diversity and inclusion is at our centre. Whilst our history is rooted in access - to nature, the outdoors, culture, heritage, and travel - we recognise that access to these public assets is not equitable.

And so, moving forward, we are taking great steps in:

- Ensuring that 'all means all'. Through feedback from a wider range of users, we can shape our service improvements to create access for everyone.
- Diversifying the make-up of our staff body. Through the development of a significant internal training programme and a focus on new recruitment approaches, we are growing the capacity and culture to support our EDI work.
- Focusing proportionately more resource on those who are both excluded but could also benefit the most from our services. By targeting special schools and alternative provision in our education programme and working closely with our Housing Association and Action for Children partners, we can grow access for those previously unable to reach us. Generation Green is only the start of these efforts.
- Amplifying the voices of a wider group of staff, users, partners and communities in support of the wider cause of EDI. This has been developed in our Outside Voices project.
- Contributing to and learning from the evidence base - of both challenges and solutions. Through collaborative work, we share our data and writing to feed into the work of others.
- Working with partners and community groups to develop the capacity of charities and networks led by those with a range of lived experiences. Through our partnership with Natural England, we have developed our community of practice, Outdoor Citizens.

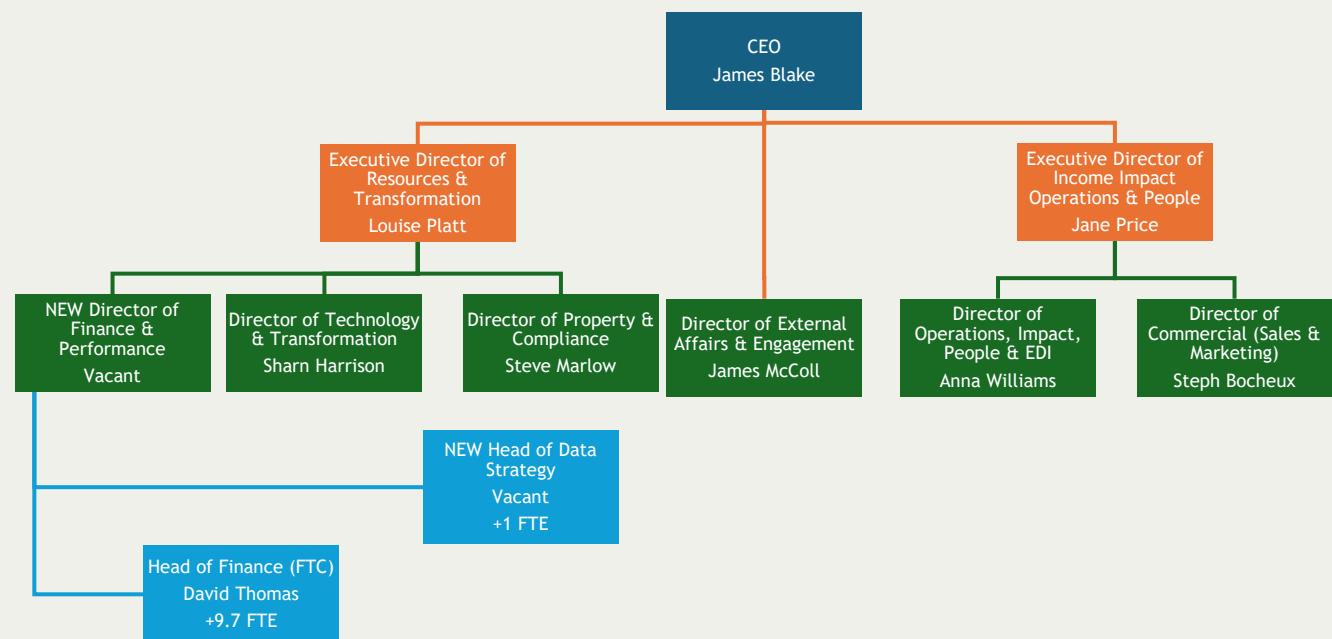


Adventure. For the first time and a life time

To learn more about our organisation's 10-year strategy: 'Adventure. For the first time and a lifetime', please visit [here](#).

A link to our annual report and accounts can be viewed [here](#).

Our hostels and services give access to nature to over one million people each year, and as an organisation, we are committed to protecting the environment for future generations to enjoy. To learn more about our sustainability goals and achievements, please visit [here](#).



Job description

Job title:

Director of Finance & Performance

Reports to:

Executive Director of Resources & Transformation

Direct reports:

Head of Finance, Head of Data Strategy

Overall responsibility for team of approximately 12 employees across Finance, Performance Management, and Business Intelligence functions.

Relationships:

Internal: Executive Team and Directors, Board of Trustees, Audit and Risk Committee, all Directorate heads, Finance Committee

External:

Banks and lenders, external auditors, performance benchmarking organisations, sector finance networks

Role purpose

You will provide strategic leadership for YHA's Finance and Performance functions, driving data-driven decision making and organisational efficiency while ensuring robust financial stewardship. You'll oversee YHA's financial management and reporting, establish comprehensive performance management frameworks, and develop business intelligence capabilities that support YHA's recovery and long-term sustainability. This role is critical to delivering analytical rigor and financial stability during YHA's transformation while building sustainable performance management culture.

This role represents a critical enhancement to traditional finance director responsibilities, integrating financial stewardship with comprehensive performance management and business intelligence leadership. The successful candidate will drive YHA's evolution toward data-driven decision making while maintaining the highest standards of financial management and regulatory compliance.

Success requires exceptional analytical capability combined with strong financial leadership and the ability to influence organisational culture toward enhanced performance management. The role offers the opportunity to shape YHA's future through building sustainable analytical capabilities that support long-term mission delivery and organisational effectiveness.

- Development of high-performing, Finance, Data and Performance teams
- Recognition as key contributor to YHA's organisational transformation and sustainable future

Main responsibilities

You'll deliver financial leadership & stewardship

- You'll provide strategic financial leadership, ensuring robust financial planning, management, and reporting that supports YHA's recovery and transformation objectives. You'll oversee all aspects of financial management including budgeting, forecasting, management accounting, and statutory reporting while ensuring alignment with charitable objectives and regulatory requirements.
- You'll lead the development of YHA's financial strategy and policies, providing enhanced financial analysis and modelling to support strategic decision-making. This includes investment appraisal, cost-benefit analysis, and scenario planning for major organisational changes including network rationalisation and technology transformation.
- You'll ensure effective financial controls and governance frameworks are maintained, working closely with auditors and the Audit & Risk Committee to ensure compliance with all financial regulations and best practices for charitable organisations. You'll manage relationships with banks, lenders, and financial institutions, overseeing debt management strategies and ensuring optimal financial positioning.
- You'll provide strategic oversight for the organisation's analytical capability, working in partnership with the Head of Data Strategy during the Beacon implementation period. Post- Beacon, you'll assume direct leadership of consolidated analysis functions, ensuring standardized approaches to performance measurement, benchmarking, and continuous improvement.

You'll lead performance management & business intelligence

- You'll establish and lead YHA's comprehensive performance management framework, developing KPI systems, business intelligence capabilities, and analytical approaches that drive evidence-based decision making across all organisational functions. This represents a significant enhancement to traditional finance roles, integrating operational performance with financial management.
- You'll oversee the development and maintenance of management information systems, ensuring accurate, timely, and relevant reporting that supports operational management and strategic planning. You'll work closely with the Technology function to ensure effective integration between financial systems and performance measurement tools.
- You'll consolidate and lead the organisation's analytical capability, bringing together fragmented analysis functions and establishing standardized approaches to performance measurement, benchmarking, and continuous improvement. This includes oversight of business intelligence development, dashboard creation, and management reporting systems.
- You'll establish performance standards and measurement frameworks across all directorates, working collaboratively to embed data-driven decision making and continuous improvement methodologies that support YHA's operational efficiency and mission delivery.

Main responsibilities

You'll lead and improve business planning & strategic analysis

- You'll lead YHA's business planning processes, integrating financial planning with operational performance management and strategic objective setting. You'll oversee the development of annual budgets, medium-term financial plans, and strategic scenarios that support Board decision-making and organisational planning.
- You'll provide enhanced analytical support for major strategic decisions, including asset disposal planning, investment appraisal, and organisational restructuring. Your analysis will support critical transformation decisions including HMS implementation, partnership model development, and network optimisation.
- You'll develop and maintain financial modelling capabilities that support scenario planning, risk assessment, and strategic option evaluation. This includes supporting the Executive team with analytical frameworks for complex organisational decisions.
- You'll ensure integration between financial performance and operational delivery, establishing clear linkages between resource allocation, operational outcomes, and mission achievement.

You'll provide transformation support & change management

- You'll provide analytical and financial leadership support for YHA's organisational transformation, ensuring financial frameworks support rather than constrain necessary change. You'll develop performance measurement approaches that track transformation progress and validate achievement of efficiency and effectiveness targets.
- You'll work closely with the Executive Director Resources & Transformation to ensure analytical rigor supports transformation decision-making while maintaining financial stability and stakeholder confidence.
- You'll establish change management frameworks for financial and performance management processes, ensuring smooth transition to enhanced analytical approaches while maintaining operational continuity.
- You'll co-lead the cultural transformation toward data-driven decision making, establishing policies and governance requirements while the Head of Data Strategy provides capability building and technical enablement. This partnership approach ensures both authority and support for sustainable change, with clear accountability for embedding evidence-based decision making across all Director-level decisions.

Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- Senior financial leadership experience within complex, multi-site organisations, including responsibility for strategic financial planning, budgeting, forecasting and financial risk management
- Professional accountancy qualification (ACCA, CIMA, ACA, or equivalent experience), with a strong understanding of charity finance, governance and regulatory requirements
- Demonstrable experience working with performance management frameworks, KPIs and management reporting across multiple services or locations, using data and analytics to support organisational decision-making and improvement
- Exceptional commercial and strategic acumen, with demonstrated experience providing analytical support for major strategic decisions, including organisational restructuring, through, for example, scenario planning, financial modelling and strategic option evaluation
- Ability to challenge, influence and support senior leadership through evidence-led insight, with a strong track record of developing internal analytical capability and building high-performing teams
- Experience leading and developing teams through change, building trusted senior-level relationships across functions, and operating at Director or equivalent level in organisations of comparable scale or complexity
- Strong understanding of charity finance, regulatory requirements, and governance frameworks

Skills and abilities

- Exceptional analytical and problem-solving capabilities with attention to detail and accuracy
- Ability to see connections between financial performance, operational efficiency, and strategic objectives
- Strong numerical and statistical analysis skills with capability to handle complex data sets
- Confident and effective communicator, able to engage and influence a wide range of audiences, from technical specialists and operational leaders to Executive Team, Board and external stakeholders
- Strong negotiation skills and experience managing relationships with external stakeholders including auditors and lenders
- Ability to connect financial performance, operational delivery and strategic objectives, supporting consistency and clarity across diverse services and locations
- Ability to maintain performance standards and team morale during periods of significant organisational change
- Strong resilience and adaptability in dynamic, fast-changing environments
- Collaborative and pragmatic in approach, with the ability to challenge constructively, build consensus and work effectively across organisational and geographical boundaries

Person specification

Values and behaviours

- Values-led and purpose-driven, with a strong commitment to integrity, inclusion and effective stewardship in a charitable or service-focused context
- Collaborative and relational, valuing diverse perspectives and fostering trust, openness and shared ownership across teams, services and locations
- Thoughtful, calm and reflective, bringing sound judgement, curiosity and a commitment to continuous improvement, particularly in complex or ambiguous environments



Terms of appointment

Salary

The salary for this role is c.£93,000 per annum on a full-time permanent basis, with an additional £5,400 per annum car allowance

Contract

This role is on a full-time permanent basis.

Location

Home based, but with the ability to travel periodically to our HQ in Matlock (min 1/month); to London and to our network across England and Wales.

Pension

Pension is 3% & 5% contribution (Employer/Employee).

Annual Leave

28 days excluding Bank Holidays increasing to 29 after 1 year with 2 additional days for 10 years' plus service.

Additional Benefits

Private Health Care provided by AXA.



How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to the [Starfish Search website here](#) and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date: Friday 20th February 2026

Preliminary interviews: w/c Monday 9th March 2026

Final Panel interviews: w/c Monday 6th April 2026

