

**Charlie's Promise**

**2024**

**Annual review**

**For a safer future**



# Welcome

to the first year of  
**Charlie's Promise.**

**01 Our brand**

**02 Our work**

**03 Our fundraising**



Wow, what a year.

When Charlie was on life support, and we knew we would have to say goodbye to him, the promise I made him came from the overwhelming love I had and have for my little boy. I wanted everyone to know the name Charlie Cosser. He was too special to be forgotten.

I knew I would keep my promise, I would travel wherever I was wanted to tell people about Charlie. I know I will spend the rest of my life talking about Charlie and telling people about the immense dangers of carrying and using a knife and the immeasurable impact knife crime has on the victim, their family and friends and the wider community.

What I didn't know was how much love and support we would have, the things people would do and the lengths they would go to, to help me and my family and to help me keep my promise to Charlie. We have been blown away by the endless support, not only locally but nationally, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Knife crime is out of control in the UK and our young people deserve better. The feedback Charlie's Promise has received from sharing Charlie's story has been incredibly powerful and heartwarming and I have no doubt that what we are all doing will be helping to reduce knife crime and save lives.

**Martin Cosser, CEO**



## Our brand

We have created a strong brand and have an online shop which sells hoodies, t-shirts, caps, bucket hats, beanies, key rings, car stickers and pin badges. Sales come from across the UK and our website has been viewed in **57 different countries**.

**To: martin@charliespromise.org**  
**Subject: Talks at Canterbury district**

Good afternoon,

I am a police officer based in Canterbury – I attended one of your talks two weeks ago at the Leigh Academy in Dartford and was so overwhelmed. You delivered the talk with such emotion – I think you connected with everyone in the room.

I am very passionate about knife crime, too many young people either think it is 'cool' to carry knives or feel pressured into it to 'protect themselves' or just to fit in. I really want to breakdown this narrative as too many young people are getting seriously injured or dying from knives.

It was honestly the most impactful and emotional talk on knife crime I have ever heard, it left the entire room of around 200 students, 20 staff and 3 police officers in tears and speechless. The message you are trying to send out to stop knife crime – stop carrying knives (not cool and puts you at more risk of violence/injury), report it anonymously if someone you know is carry a knife, if you hear someone has a knife at an event tell security/ call the police. Is such an important message.

I honestly believe if this talk can be delivered to every school (or as many as possible), it will save lives and stop people carrying knives (not eliminate but have the biggest impact I can envision). I am passionate about this being delivered to all the secondary schools in Canterbury, if you have capacity. I have approached the council and my boss to try to secure funding – which I believe I will be able to get, but I need to submit a request – how much would an input cost individually and would there be any reduction if multiple were booked at the same time.

We are thinking 10 inputs in secondary schools around the Canterbury area – probably at the beginning of the next academic year? Again if you have the capacity as I know you said you were booked and the talks are very taxing on you which I fully appreciate. What you can offer I think is so powerful! Let me know your thoughts?

# Statistics

19,320

Unique visitors

5,525

Unique visitors via Google search

1,229

Most unique visitors in 24 hours

665

Items sold via website

26,240

Site sessions

8,920

Unique visitors via social media\*

67,195

Website total page views

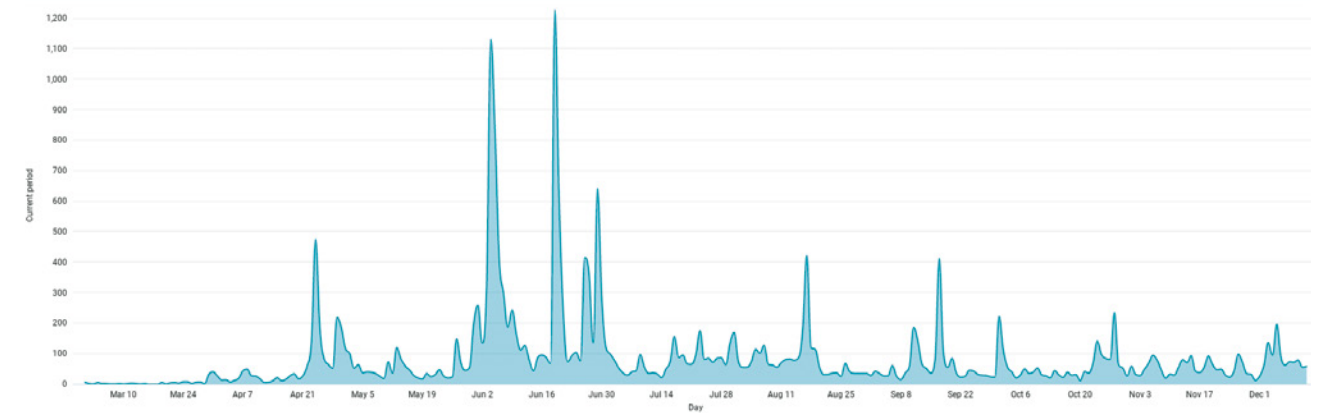
3m 9s

Average session duration

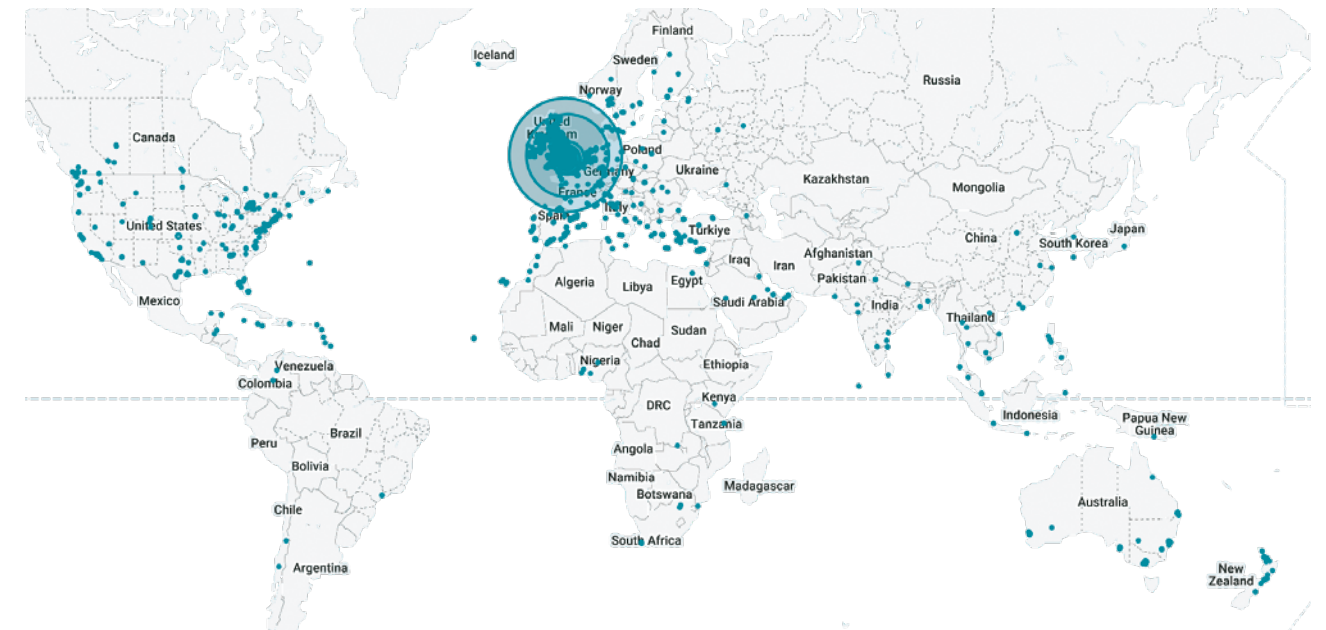
Analytics are correct as of 11.12.24

\* TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter) and LinkedIn

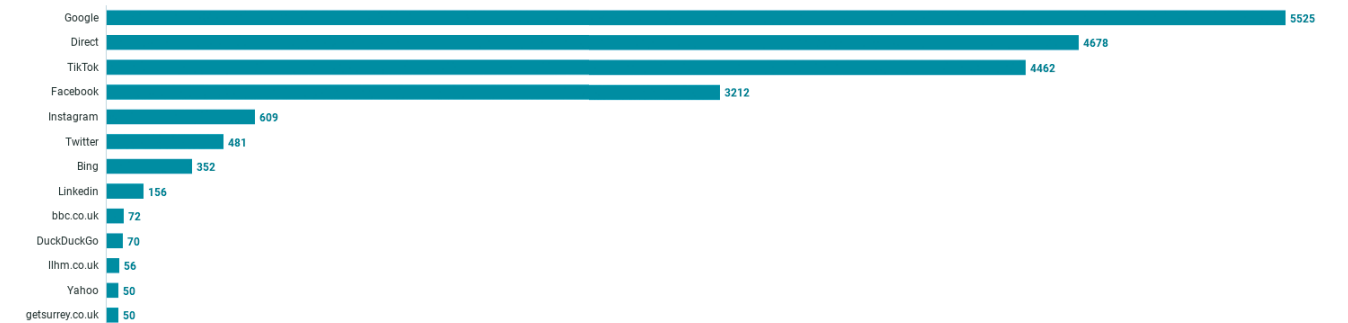
## Total unique visitors



## Visitors by city



## Traffic by referring site







“ My daughter was in your assembly yesterday and was really moved. She told me all about it... you totally captured every single child in that school hall.. she told me how hard it was for you and how she and many others were so emotional listening to you... thank you for being so brave and sharing your utterly heartbreaking experience of losing your beautiful son.”



# 02

## Our work

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Charlie's Promise made its first school visit in April 2024 and since our launch we have visited or spoken to over **17 different settings** and have presented over **70 times**.

“The students you spoke to struggle to access lessons and to see them sit still for that time was actually unbelievable in itself. I have worked at the academy for 24 years and the education I watched you deliver was the most powerful I have ever seen, you have undoubtedly made an impact in our community despite the fact we are not local to you.”

# Talks

We have shared Charlie's story with over **12,000** students, parents, teachers and other various professions.

These settings include:

- Comprehensive Schools
- Primary Schools
- Public Schools
- KCC SEN Schools
- Prisons
- Head Teachers Meetings
- Conferences
- Scout Groups
- Football Clubs
- Online Presentations
- Vodafone Store Managers
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Parent Talks
- Youth clubs
- Guildford School of Acting and the Royal Shakespeare Company
- Foundation Schools

These talks have taken us to **10 different counties** in the South:

- Surrey
- Essex
- London
- Berkshire
- East Sussex
- West Sussex
- Kent
- Oxfordshire
- Hampshire
- Wiltshire

**“ You had a real impact on our parents, students and staff. I truly believe that you are single handedly saving lives and preventing further suffering in our communities.”**

# Relationships

We can't do this alone, and we know that working with others is key to the sustainable future of Charlie's Promise.

We have worked with and building relationships with other knife crime charities including the Ben Kinsella Trust and Lives Not Knives. We have met with Dame Diana Johnson – Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire. We are looking to work alongside these charities, and with Dame Diana and the UK government with their manifesto pledge to reduce knife crime by 50% over the next 10 years. We are passionate that tackling knife crime starts with education from a primary school age, so we are campaigning to get this to be a compulsory part of PHSE lessons from key stage 2.

We have either worked with, built relationships with or are due to meet with:

- **Surrey Police** – Working alongside the Surrey Serious Violence Reduction Partnership in the hope of bringing a knife crime education exhibition and youth hub to Surrey.
- **Kent Police** – Delivering Charlie's story in 9 schools in Gravesham as part of their Crime Reduction initiative
- **Sussex Police** – Working alongside to deliver Operation Sceptre, producing short films delivering messages on knife crime which are shared with parents and young people
- **Rob Knox Foundation** – appeared on Newsnight with Rob's father Colin Knox as fathers united in grief, campaigning for better knife crime education
- **Project Youth** – Working with founder and reformed gang member Carl Scott who delivers knife crime workshops in schools
- **The Ben Kinsella Trust** – Visited their exhibition and experienced their decision and consequence workshop with John Boshier and Emmie Harris from Surrey Police. Met with CEO Patrick Green
- **Real Direction** – Plans to work with them to record a short film based on our real life lived experiences of knife crime and the impact which will be shared on their digital platform and used for educational purposes
- **Prisons** – presenting for and participating in the Prison Fellowship Sycamore Tree Restorative Justice course in HMP Coldingley, Downsview and Send prisons. This helps us understand the emotional drivers why people carry and use knives.



# Charlie's Promise

## Meet Charlie

Charlie was our 17 year-old son, brother, grandson, nephew, cousin and friend.

He was fun-loving, kind, caring, loyal and cheeky with the most ridiculously silly sense of humour.

On Saturday 22nd July 2023, Charlie went to a house party in a small village in West Sussex and never returned home. He was fatally stabbed four times in the early hours of Sunday and died of his injuries in hospital two days later on Tuesday 25th July 2023.

Whilst Charlie was on life support, his dad Martin made the most important promise of his life. He promised Charlie he would do everything he can to raise awareness of knife crime and the immeasurable damage it causes to the victim, their family and friends.

If it can happen to Charlie, a young lad who didn't like arguments and avoided trouble – he preferred silly dancing and making people laugh – it can happen to anyone.

As he laid fighting for his life, Charlie's Promise was born.



We launched Charlie's Promise on 23rd April 2024 at AFC Wimbledon, with over 300 invited guests in attendance. Martin has since spoken 70 times, at 17 venues, in 10 counties, reaching over 12,000 people.



# 03

## Our fundraising

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Through our own fundraising efforts, and those of amazing volunteers, we have organised or attended a huge range of events through 2024.

**“I can’t tell you all the emotions I felt and went through that day, but he really is quite a remarkable man.”**

Christina White  
Stifford Clays Primary School

# Events

Since March, we have organised or attended 25 fundraising events.

These include:

- Netball and football tournaments
- Tree plantings
- Village fetes
- Pub fairs
- Quiz nights
- Music evenings
- Theatre productions
- Car fairs

Over 100 people or organisations either will be of have been fundraising for Charlie's Promise by taking on challenges such as:

- Tough Mudders, Marathons
- Ultra Marathons and Ultra Walks
- 92 Holes of Golf
- 24 hour rowathon
- 24 hour darts and snooker marathon
- Various walks and runs
- 500 km of swimming, cycling and running in a month
- cold water dips
- Hosting quiz nights
- Putting on pantomimes
- Holding a Jungle Body class
- Organising cake stalls and coffee mornings
- Holding awareness days and raffles
- Having mufti days
- Pledging % donations from their work
- Nominating Charlie's Promise as their chosen charity





“ Martin’s speech was powerful and inspiring. It’s really important that the children understand the wider impact of carrying a knife. Martin is quite literally saving lives.”



“  
Your talk had a real impact, even those who attended as a ‘tick box exercise’ admitted they got so much more out of it than they thought they would.”

“  
I was lucky enough to be at your session today at Pyrford Primary. It was the most influential training I have ever attended.”

“  
Martin’s talk was raw, powerful, insightful and educational. You could have heard a pin drop.”

“  
Genuinely the best assembly I’ve ever had thank you.”

“  
Martin came to my school today and told Charlie’s story to a class. As a teacher, I found this one of the most profound and remarkable stories of human achievement and endurance that I’ve ever heard. Thank you for Charlie.”

“  
Your extremely heartfelt and engaging talk had a profound impact on both students and staff alike. I have genuinely never seen our students so completely absorbed in a speaker and what you had to say, you really could have heard a pin drop. Many of them have told me this is something they will never forget. Some Year 11s have even said they might wear Air Force 1s to their prom this year!”

“  
I have been teaching for eleven years now and I have never witnessed such an astounding reaction to an external speaker like I did today. The impact of your presentation will be long lasting and life changing.”

“  
The world is a better and safer place with people like you in it speaking out and educating people on the danger of their actions. You are honouring the promise and making a huge difference in many people’s lives.”

“  
Hi, you gave a very moving talk at my school (Christ’s College). I made a donation to support your cause, as I fell very strongly about this, and the talk has really made an impression on me, and Charlie sounds like a lovely lad.”

“  
I have worked at the academy for 24 years and the education I watched you deliver was the most powerful I have ever seen.”

“  
I have had pupils talk to me all day about Charlie, and I know you’ve made such an impact on them and us staff alike.

“  
Hey. You came to my school last Friday and I just wanted to say how thankful I am. You made a huge impact on our whole school and I’ve genuinely never seen my year so quiet before. What you do is so special and important and more people need to know about it.”

“  
Your story really touched me and a lot of my friends today, I am so sorry for your loss and its changed my perspective on a lot of things so thank you for spreading your story and we will never forget Charlie.”

“  
Without a shadow of a doubt, you will probably save many lives by setting up your session with us. I hope that knife crime decrease. I will always honour Charlie’s promise.”

“  
After joining the parents presentation I came home and had a long conversation with my 15 year old son. We will both always remember the name Charlie Cosser.”

“  
Hi Martin you were at the Weald today and I just want to say that you have influenced my whole year and I want to say that Charlie is proud of you and you are a great dad.”

“  
Thank you for coming into my school today Martin, I really felt like your assembly made many people feel more educated on knife crime.”

“  
My daughter came home today talking non stop about your talk. Thank you for trying to make this world better and safer for our kinds. Truly inspirational.”

“  
The world is a better and safer place with people like you in it speaking out and educating people on the danger of their actions. You are honouring the promise and making a huge difference in many people’s lives.”

“  
Hello, you recently spoke at my son’s school The Weald. I just wanted to let you know that your talk has had a profound impact on him and I wanted to thank you very much for turning your indescribable pain into something so positive and, potentially, transformative for kids who could well end up making choices that lead them into potentially dangerous situations or find themselves suddenly out of their depth. He showed me the message that he (Jude) sent to you earlier on – it was so heartfelt and quite out of character as, at the moment, he’s at that stage of being too focused on how ‘cool’ he is – and promptly burst into tears. I think it was a real wake up call and I know Charlie’s story will last with Jude for a life time.”

“  
One of the most powerful and impactful and important presentations I have ever seen. It really impacted the students too – LHS teacher for c15/20 years.”

“  
Thank you for what you are doing Martin. My son just came home from school and said your assembly was heartbreaking but it’s made a huge impact on him. Thank you for everything you and your family are doing”

“  
The students and staff alike were very moved by your story. It was clear by their faces and feedback after that they will take something away from your presentation. They are a hard-to-reach group but you have clearly made an impression on them.”

“  
I also overheard some corridor talk. A group of tricky male pupils, I expect the exact kind that you are hoping to get a message to were talking. The biggest one of the lot said “how the f\*ck did you not cry at that” to the other boys. The boy who said it has a huge influence over the others and I just thought that your job yesterday had been done.”

“  
I was part of your talk yesterday you are an inspiration! You are right I have no understanding how you and your family feel I cried the majority of the time you were speaking as being a parent this is my greatest fear and I am so sorry it is your reality! I am speaking to my headteacher about having you come into our school to educate our young people! You deliver such an important message through grief and love. I am so sorry for what happened to Charlie the work you are doing is invaluable!”

“  
Hi Martin, You came to my school today to speak up about knife crime, you’ve moved so many people today we all are truly devastated in what you and your family went through. Thank you so much for sharing Charlie’s story I appreciate it so much and am very grateful I got to hear this. After your talk this has changed a lot of peoples perspectives.”

“  
I was very inspired by your story thank you for sharing it I am very sorry for what happened to Charlie thank you.”

“  
Thank you for being so brave and standing up to knife crime.”



