

Charlie Waller News

THE CHARLIE WALLER TRUST NEWSLETTER



TOGETHER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Our whole school approach to wellbeing

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF BOOK CLUB

Our book club is a decade old!

FREE MENTAL HEALTH WEBINARS

Our range of free webinars is growing

SEPT 2026 • ISSUE 53



Charlie Waller was a dynamic, funny, kind and successful young man, with a close and loving family. To the outside world, he had everything to live for. Yet in 1997, at the age of 28, Charlie died by suicide. He was suffering from depression.

In response to this tragedy, his family founded the Charlie Waller Trust, to open up the conversation around depression initially, and to ensure that young people are able to understand and look after their mental health and to spot the signs in others.

Our mission

We put young people at the heart of what we do: helping them achieve and sustain better mental health. We do this by equipping those closest to young people – families, friends, educators, communities and employers – with strategies and support based on the best available evidence.

Our work

We provide mental health training, resources and consultancy to schools, colleges, universities and workplaces, communities and families. We build partnerships to help create a long-term culture of wellbeing.

We empower educators, employers, parents and carers to support young people through their journey from primary school to the early years of their working lives.

Our approach

Our work supports families and organisations in meaningful and impactful ways. Our values – being accountable, inclusive, collaborative, personal and positive – shape everything we do. We measure our impact, centre lived experience and draw on the latest mental health research to ensure our work makes a meaningful difference for young people, families and organisations.

Our vision

Our vision is of a world in which young people, and families, have the support, the skills and the resilience to be mentally well for life.



Positive

We take a positive approach to mental health. We focus on prevention and early intervention, and recognise the importance of offering hope.



Proven

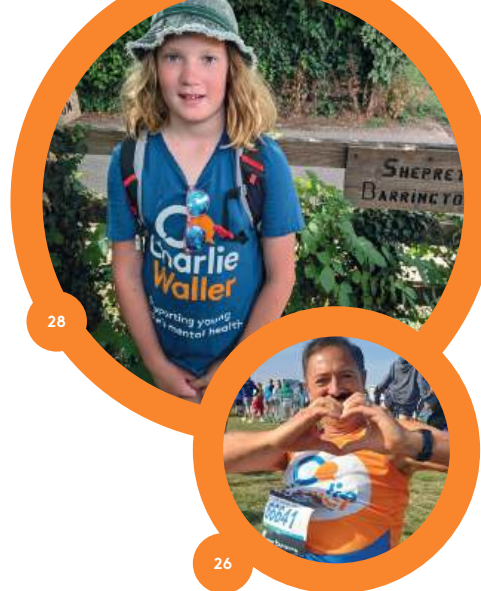
Our consultancy, training and resources are all based on sound clinical evidence.



Practical

We give people practical strategies and tools to care for their mental health, and to support others in doing so.

Supporting young people's mental health



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Get in touch

hello@charliewaller.org
01635 869754

Find out more

charliewaller.org

Follow us



COVER STORY

Lizzie Orange completed a mighty ski tour fundraiser for the Trust

Expert mental health training and consultancy

Did you know that poor mental health costs UK employers £51 billion per year?... and that stress continues to be one of the main causes of absence?

These are just two of the reasons why it's vital to address mental health at work.

Charlie Waller Workplace provides training in mental health and wellbeing across the UK. Our core training session, Managing for Good Mental Health, gives managers the skills and confidence to manage mental health in their teams. Leading for Good Mental Health enables leaders to build a culture of positive mental health to attract and retain high-quality staff. Learning for Good Mental Health helps all employees learn how to take care of their mental wellbeing.

Get in touch

hello@charliewallerworkplace.org
01635 869754 - you can ring us between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday

Find out more
charliewallerworkplace.org

Follow us



Bespoke, targeted training

Our mental health experts will work with you to provide training tailored precisely to your organisation's needs.

"We are very happy with the relationship we've got with Charlie Waller Workplace. We've seen big improvements in the questions about mental health support in our staff engagement survey since we've started working with you"

Greg Charman
Air Partner
Environmental, Social & Governance Manager

LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

It is a privilege to be the Chairman of the Charlie Waller Trust's board of trustees, a role which my father, Sir Mark Waller, held from the founding of the Trust in 1997 until 2020.

Next year will mark the Trust's 30th anniversary and, during those three decades, the charity has undergone a remarkable evolution. Although it is too little too late, this is a good time to acknowledge the enormous contribution of our trustees, who have worked tirelessly over the last thirty years to honour Charlie's memory by tackling the hugely concerning levels of mental ill-health amongst children and young people.

From the very beginning, my fellow trustees have been instrumental in steering the Trust through periods of change and growth.

They have ensured it is managed to the highest standards and adheres faithfully to its objects of helping young people improve their mental health and reducing stigma.

We have been extremely fortunate in attracting to the board experts in a wide variety of fields, including finance, education, IT, communications and, of course, mental health. They have held high-ranking positions in, for example, universities, city firms and the health service, and many have set up and run very successful businesses.

The trustees have ensured that our work has always been carried out with integrity, probity and consistent use of the best available evidence. They have trodden a path which has enabled the Trust to use its expertise in the service of government policy on mental health, whilst maintaining its impartiality as a charitable organisation.

They have helped the Trust stay true to the values it was set up to espouse, and also allowed it to move with the times – by, for instance, embracing the importance of listening to the views of those with lived experience of the issues we are trying to address, especially parents, carers and young people.



Each trustee brings something unique to the Trust, its ethos and development, and we are profoundly grateful to all who have served. As a society, we rightly place a high value on volunteering; the time and talents our trustees give so generously will help make positive changes to the mental health landscape for children and young people for many years to come. Their contributions will be valued well into the future.

It is always sad to say goodbye to board members when they step down but heartening to welcome new trustees. Last year we were joined by Nick Garrett, whom we featured in the Autumn 2025 edition, and by Tim West: you can read an interview with Tim on page 14. In the near future, we will be inviting people under 30 to apply to become 'young trustees', an exciting development which will help ensure the voices of young people are heard at all levels of the Trust.

Finally, as we approach our 30th anniversary, supporting the Trust's long-term future is much on the minds of everyone involved in its work. We are looking at different ways of doing this, including the promotion of legacy giving. Gifts in wills are invaluable in helping us plan our future work and you can read more about this important part of our activity on page 11. If you are interested in supporting our work in this way, please do get in touch with the fundraising team, who will be happy to answer any questions.

RICHARD WALLER KC, CHAIRMAN

NEWS AND UPDATES

BEHIND THE SCENES

Millions of people in England have been helped by NHS Talking Therapies since it was set up in 2008. Back then it was called 'Improved Access to Psychological Therapies' (or IAPT) and the Trust played a key role in bringing it into being, funding some of the research Lord Layard used to persuade the government of the need for it.

This is just one instance of the work the Trust has done over the years to influence mental health policy behind the scenes, and these efforts are continuing. Last autumn the Trust's Chairman, Richard Waller, and I met with Baroness Merron, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Women's Health and Mental Health; since December 2025, we have been meeting monthly with her team, sharing the work we are doing to help shape briefing documents and policy discussions around young people's mental health.

This is in addition to our formal responses to calls for evidence from the Department of Health and Social Care, including most recently those regarding 'evidence-based interventions to improve quality and performance in children and young people's health' and the new 10-year Mental Health Strategy for England.

Earlier this year, we were one of only seven charities invited to a consultation with the Department of Education around the proposed SEND reforms (special educational needs and disabilities).



The PLACE network, our community of parent carer peer support groups, was also consulted by colleagues from the Department of Health and Social Care on both the prevalence review (looking at mental health, autism and ADHD), and the NEET review (exploring how we could best support the over one million young people not in education, employment or training). Both full reports are expected this autumn and will feed into the delivery plans of the new mental health strategy.

It's energising to have such positive engagement with leaders who are committed to improving mental health services for young people.

As our Chairman mentions in his letter on page 5, the Trust will be marking its 30th anniversary next year. Those years of experience, informed by research from leading experts, have enabled the Trust to develop our trusted reputation within the sector. Considered alongside the Charlie Waller Institute (our sister organisation), Charlie's name is synonymous with compassion, quality, evidence-based approaches, and lived experience; this is why our views have been, and continue to be, sought out and valued at the national level. We will continue to keep you informed of this aspect of our work – it is your support that enables us to do it.

Dr Hannah Vickery, CEO

PARENTS AND CARERS SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

Caring for a child struggling with their mental health can be extremely difficult. Often the best support comes from others who've been through it – known as parent carer peer support (PCPS).



We offer training to parents and carers who are already working or volunteering as PCPS workers, and to parents and carers supported by local services who would like to train to become PCPS workers. So far this year, 45 people have been through the training, which is designed and delivered in collaboration with our Parent Carer Lived Experience Lead, Nikki Chapman.

Kemi, a recent participant, said: "Undertaking the PCPS training means I now feel more confident delivering peer group sessions. The training was a great space to reflect on what I've been doing and think about developments in my practice."

TRAUMA RECOVERY RESOURCE

We'll soon be adding a new resource to our website: Supporting a Child Recovering from Trauma. It's primarily aimed at parents and carers looking to help their child after they have experienced a traumatic event, for example a serious accident or an assault. (While the advice may help with a wide range of experiences, the evidence is best for single-event trauma.)

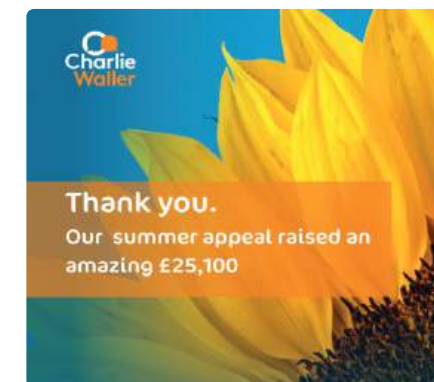


The resource gives practical advice on subjects such as managing difficult feelings, facing fears and creating space to talk. Importantly, a whole section is dedicated to reminding parents and carers of the importance of looking after themselves too.

It's another great example of our partnership work with experts in the field,

including Professor Cathy Creswell, based at the University of Oxford. Cathy has a longstanding relationship with the Trust and our collaboration continues, for instance with the Parent Carer Research Network.

A SUCCESSFUL SUMMER APPEAL



Our summer appeal, held over a week in June, raised an amazing £25,101 (including Gift Aid). Thank you so much to everyone who gave so generously and raised awareness of the Trust.

The focus of the appeal was the support we can give to families while they're on the waiting list for mental health services – hence the name, Together Through the Wait. Local mental health services provided by the NHS carry out important, effective work. However, despite continued investment in services, demand for children's mental health support continues to rise. In addition, access to support still varies widely, depending on where families live. Many people are left without help for a long time, not knowing where to turn.

For parents and carers, the wait can be heartbreaking. Every day brings uncertainty, worry and the feeling of facing it alone. The funds raised through the appeal will help us to reach more parents and carers with practical strategies for supporting young people who are struggling with their mental health. We will provide training and resources they can use straight away, on topics such as self-harm, eating disorders and talking about suicide.

E-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Our existing e-learning modules for staff working in higher education settings have recently been updated and migrated to a new platform. This has greatly improved the accessibility of the courses and the overall learning experience. Since the relaunch began in May 2026, we have had over 1,500 users enrol on the modules. The suite of free online courses is designed to provide staff with valuable knowledge and skills relating to mental health that they can use to support staff, students and also their own wellbeing.

It consists of four modules: 'Managing supporting staff' explores how we can support both ourselves and one another in the workplace, helping to build confidence in recognising when colleagues may need support.

'Staff supporting students' helps learners to understand how to support students with their mental health and wellbeing.

'Wellbeing strategies' focuses on what influences students' own wellbeing and practical strategies they can use.

Finally, 'Managing risk and crises' explores how to spot the signs of a mental health crisis, understand self-harm behaviours and identify warning signs that someone may be experiencing psychosis.

A similar set of e-learning modules will be available to further education staff in the coming months.

To find out more and to access the e-learning, visit charliewaller.org



WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Our 'whole organisation approach' helps schools, colleges and universities involve their whole community in improving wellbeing – staff, students and, where appropriate, parents and carers.



Until now, this approach has been used largely within educational settings. Recently, however, we have been expanding the work into community settings.

One such example can be seen in mental health trainer Gemma Howard's work with a Welsh community charity: Single Parents Wellbeing is dedicated to improving the wellbeing of single parents, their children and families across Wales. Gemma's aim was to work collaboratively with them to identify where a whole organisational approach would add the greatest value to the charity and the community it serves.

It became clear that staff wellbeing was already a significant strength and that the greatest opportunity for development lay within the wider community. They identified three priorities: to increase parents' and carers' knowledge, confidence and skills to support their children's emotional wellbeing; to help parents and carers strengthen their own wellbeing; and to develop a formal community voice to capture feedback, evaluate impact and inform future service development.

These goals have shaped an ongoing programme of parent/carers workshops, and feedback has been positive, with attendees saying the sessions feel accessible, welcoming and non-judgemental. One attendee said: "Such a valuable workshop with lots of practical advice and signposting, as well as an explanation of the theory."

Gemma says: "When grounded in collaboration, flexibility and strong relationships, the whole organisation approach has the potential to strengthen not only organisational wellbeing but also the wellbeing of the wider communities which organisations exist to serve."

TALKING THERAPIES PILOT UPDATE

As our CEO, Dr Hannah Vickery, mentions in her introduction, huge numbers of people benefit from Talking Therapies services, often through engaging in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). However, research has shown that outcomes for young people using Talking Therapies are less positive compared to those for adults over 25.



Looking to address this, we have been working to train clinical staff across two Talking Therapies services in how they can most effectively engage and work therapeutically with 16- to 24-year-olds. Along with clinical academic staff from our sister organisation, the Charlie Waller Institute, we delivered three interactive training sessions to over 250 mental health clinicians working in these adult services on how to work best with this age group.

The sessions have had valuable input from young people and their families to ensure their voices are reflected. One of our youth ambassadors said:

"Unfortunately, there is still a lot of stigma around CBT which can cause confusion as to what its use really is. Personally, I would have loved to know more about what it would involve, not only so I could make a more informed decision but also to give myself a better understanding of the process."

The pilot has been evaluated using clinician-reported feedback, as well as patient outcomes before and after the training; the results are so promising that the services have reached out to book in more!

Clinicians reported significant improvements in their levels of confidence, knowledge and skills, with average score increases of 25%, 35% and 36% respectively. When asked if they knew when and how to work with parents and carers and/or education systems in relation to 16- to 24-year-olds, clinicians' average scores rose from 4.56 to 7.57/10 – a huge 66% increase!

SORTS UPDATE

Since 2024, we have collaborated with Dr Anne-Marie Burn and her research team at the University of Cambridge in creating a fantastic online resource about self-harm for schools.

SORTS stands for Supportive Response to Self-harm. The resources include training and information to help school staff recognise and respond to young people who self-harm.

More than 3,000 school staff in England and Wales have completed the 30-minute training module. The work was recently recognised with a Highly Commended Collaboration Award at the Cambridge Awards for Research Impact and Engagement.

We at the Charlie Waller Trust offer our heartfelt congratulations and are proud to have collaborated on this important work which has led to real-world impact.



FREE MENTAL HEALTH WEBINARS

If you're the parent or carer of a child who's struggling with their mental health, chances are you don't have much spare time. The same applies to teachers and others who work with children and young people.

So what do you do if you want to learn more about supporting young people with their mental health?

Our free webinars are a great place to start. Open to anyone with an interest in mental health or psychology, they explore practical strategies for supporting children and young people. Recent topics have included 'Anxiety in Children under 12' and 'Sleep and Mental Health in Young People'. The webinar on sleep was co-hosted by our CEO Dr Hannah Vickery and Dr Faith Orchard; it was part of 'Making Knowledge Matter', a series based on specific programmes of mental health related research.

The webinars are run by our mental health trainers, speakers and guest speakers from a wide range of professions, including psychotherapy, education, social work, youth work, nursing and psychology. Many of them are created and delivered in collaboration with our youth ambassadors and parent carer lived experience partners as part of our drive to ensure lived experience voices are at the heart of what we do; one of these was 'Understanding Loneliness in a Changing World', of which one participant said:

"Fantastic webinar!...extremely well informed – I am looking forward to receiving and sharing all the resources with my team."

We also offer free access to past webinars on a huge range of other topics, such as 'Neurodiversity and Mental Health' and 'Talking about Suicide', for which we've received some very positive feedback:

"I have received training on this subject before, so had some knowledge, but this session made me feel much more confident in dealing with these situations."

Our webinar participants are as diverse as our trainers and speakers; they include parents, carers and other family members; school, college and university staff; a variety of healthcare professionals; youth workers and community leaders.

As well as providing useful, clear information based on the best available evidence, the webinars often feature the perspectives of people who have lived experience of the topic. You can find a list of all our past webinars, and sign up for future sessions, on our website: charliewaller.org.

Thanks to a grant from **Berkshire Community Foundation**, Charlie Waller Workplace is offering free webinars for Berkshire's charity and voluntary sector, including 'Managing for Good Mental Health' (15 October 2026 in person) and 'Understanding Neurodiversity' (19 January 2027 online). To book your place, please contact workplace@charliewaller.org



A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

MAKE GOOD MENTAL HEALTH YOUR GIFT TO THE NEXT GENERATION

Good mental health is one of the keys to a fulfilling life. A gift in your will makes a real impact; it will help ensure we are there to support young people's mental health into the future.

Last October, we launched our free will-writing service, giving supporters the opportunity to leave a gift to the Trust in their will. It's a great way to support the mental health of the next generation, at no cost to you now.

FREE WILL-WRITING SERVICE

Free Wills Month is running again this October and we've partnered with award-winning specialist Farewill to enable you to write a simple will for free online or over the phone. On average it takes just 15 minutes and can be done from the comfort of your own home.

We are hugely grateful for gifts in wills, large and small. It's such a special way of supporting our work, helping us to plan for the future and support the mental health of children and young people for years to come.



If you'd like to get started on writing your will for free, visit farewill.com/charliewaller-newsletter, call 0208 050 2686 (quoting 'Charlie Waller Trust') or scan the QR below.



In partnership with
Farewill

The free service applies to a simple will; for a more complex will, there is a charge of £200.

TOGETHER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

OUR WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO WELLBEING

Schools can bring together teachers, parents, carers and pupils to create a culture that nurtures mental wellbeing. Our 'whole school approach' helps them do just that.

At Peareswood Primary School in South East London, almost half the 431 pupils were eligible for free school meals in the last academic year. Over a third had English as a second or other language and a quarter had special educational needs. The school is situated in an area considered a pocket of deprivation in terms of income, employment and child poverty.

Mental health trainer Pamela Butler has worked with the school using a 'whole school approach'. That means involving not just the teaching staff but parents and children too, building a culture of positive mental health that benefits the whole school community.



A specialist in wellbeing and parental engagement, Pamela has delivered sessions for the school on a range of topics, including digital wellbeing, transition and change, and mental health awareness – working with some communities where mental health is still a taboo. She also held sessions to train children in Years 5 and 6 to be wellbeing ambassadors for their peers.

The school uses many of the Trust's resources with the children and their families, in particular the Wellbeing Action Plan booklets.

USEFUL SNAPSHOT

Pamela's work with the school on one particular day in February gives an interesting snapshot of her work there: in the morning, she spent time talking with parents and carers over coffee. Participants included grandparents who were primary caregivers, and parents whose children were currently considered to be 'non-attenders'. Pamela says:

"The focus was on improving school attendance and engagement with learning by enhancing wellbeing and addressing anxiety. We shared strategies to help support their children with attending school and managing any anxieties.

"The parents found the group useful to talk through ideas that can help them to help their children with attending school in away that felt safe and reassuring to them."

GRIEF AND LOSS

One of the barriers to engaging with learning that the group explored was grief and loss caused by sudden bereavement, both the death of adults and of a child in the school community.

It's particularly important to apply a whole school approach to important issues like this.

As well as talking with the parents and carers, Pamela provided guidance to staff. This included a discussion on the upcoming changes to the curriculum which mean that content on grief, loss and bereavement will be mandatory from September 2026 as part of RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education). Pamela also signposted staff to support services that specialise in this area.

ENGAGING THE CHILDREN

Later in the day, Pamela worked with 30 children from Years 1 to 3 and then 32 children from Years 4 to 6, to address the topic of self-esteem and developing resilience.

Pamela explains: "These were practical sessions with various activities to keep the children engaged, creating a toolkit for them to take away and use depending on their feelings and mood. The children shared many stories and feedback during the session.

"We discussed strategies and wellbeing ideas around sleep, rest, balanced nutrition, positive self-talk and the Five Ways to Wellbeing. They found them easy to understand and remember so they could 'dip into them' when they might need support but also use them every day to develop healthy wellbeing."

As a result of Pamela's work with Peareswood, we're delighted to feature as one of their 'community link partners' on this poster in the school foyer.



"The parents found the group useful to talk through ideas that can help them to help their children."

THE WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH: A PRACTICAL TOOLKIT

Ian Macdonald, one of our mental health trainers, has co-authored a recent research study exploring the development and pilot of the Whole School and College Approach (WSCA) Measurement Toolkit for mental health and wellbeing.

The WSCA Toolkit is designed to help schools and colleges better understand, evaluate, and strengthen their whole-setting approaches to mental health and wellbeing, and the study suggests that this measurement tool is both practical and acceptable for WSCA evaluation.

A steering group of stakeholders was set up to guide the development of the toolkit. At a local level, these included school staff and operational leads for Mental Health Support Teams; nationally, they included the Department of Education and Public Health England. The toolkit was then piloted and evaluated in a number of schools.

Pupils' voices were heard through several means, including exploring their perception of wellbeing and support within schools. Informal discussions were also held with members of staff. These were then analysed and discussed within working groups that included professionals from education settings and academic researchers. It's great to see Ian's expertise contributing to this important work and helping to strengthen the evidence base in this area.

To support schools and colleges in this work, the Charlie Waller Trust offers a free Whole School and College Approach programme, providing training, resources and guidance to help embed a whole-setting approach to mental health and wellbeing.



PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS

INTERVIEW WITH TRUSTEE TIM WEST

Our trustees play a vital role in the Charlie Waller Trust, offering a wealth of experience, strategic direction and support.

Continuing a series of interviews, for this edition we spoke to Tim West, who joined the board in March 2025. His connection with the Trust, however, goes back to its very beginnings; his connection with the Waller family, even further.

"I've known the Wallers forever," he says. "I'm great friends with Rick [Richard Waller: Charlie's brother and the Trust's Chairman] and I was at Durham University with Charlie, where we both played rugby."

"My wife, Mia, was also at Durham so knew Charlie. She lived in the same shared house as him after university and was living with him when he sadly died."

It was Mia, and Tim's father, both lawyers, who helped to set up the Trust, and Mia continues to be heavily involved as chair of our fundraising committee. "As a result," says Tim, "I've always been a supporter."

Having started his working life as a teacher, Tim moved to the City in 1997. He spent 22 years at asset management company Rathbones and moved to Trinity Bridge (previously Close Brothers) in 2020, where he manages portfolios for private clients, trusts and family charities.

Tim also has experience of working with other charitable organisations. He is currently a trustee for the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society, and for The Serth and Gates Charitable Trust, whose proceeds

go to animal welfare and veterinary students. He's also a member of his local parochial church council.

He brings this expertise to his role as a trustee and member of the Finance and Investment Committee for the Charlie Waller Trust. He says: "I didn't hesitate to say yes when I was asked to be a trustee. Sadly, as with most people when they reach their mid-fifties, I have had quite a lot of experience of mental health issues with friends and family. Anything we can do to help young people struggling with their mental health is hugely worthwhile."

Tim describes his role as "monitoring and advising on the Trust's finances – the charity has ambitious plans, so we need the money to finance them." He hopes that legacies will grow as a source of funds, as well as philanthropy, and that he will be able to make an increasingly positive contribution. He explains: "With my wife supporting the fundraising, I am hoping that with my City connections, I may be able to help in this area too."

So far, Tim's impressions of the Trust as a board member are very positive. He says: "I've been favourably impressed at just how professional the Trust is; in fact, it's one of the most professional organisations I've worked with."

He can also see the challenges: "I've become aware of just how difficult fundraising is. We're raising over £1.5 million a year, which seems a great effort, but as we rely entirely on raising funds for our charitable activities, we must keep at it."

"I think the biggest challenge is to broaden our fundraising base: the need to grow our income means we must continue to attract new supporters and expand the ways in which they can support our work."

The more time Tim spends as a trustee, the more he understands the vital nature of its

Anything we can do to help young people struggling with their mental health is hugely worthwhile."



work. He says: "I have a clear understanding of the Trust's focus, which is to provide support for those in a position to help young people with their mental health. The more I am involved with the Trust, the more I understand the importance of this vital role. Speaking to parents about the help the Trust was able to give them really brings home the excellent work the Trust is doing."

THE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

The committee oversees the Trust's finances, ensuring financial performance aligns with the Trust's strategic goals. It consists of the treasurer and a number of trustees with relevant experience.

The committee takes responsibility for monitoring all financial aspects of the Trust's operations and reviews the relevant documentation, such as the three-year business plan, annual budget, quarterly accounts and risk register.

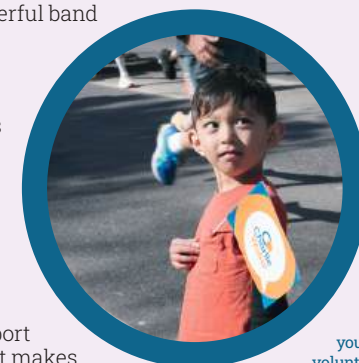
THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

From the Trust's very beginnings, we have had a wonderful band of volunteers supporting our crucial work.

Those include Tim West and the other members of our board of trustees, and his wife Mia, chair of our fundraising committee. Mia and her team of volunteers help us deliver a wide range of high-quality events throughout the year, raising both vital funds and awareness of our work. Our central office in Newbury also relies on a number of volunteers for its smooth running, including sending out over 30,000 printed resources last year!

In the first six months of this year, our volunteers have already given more than 700 hours of their time to support the Trust. A wonderful gift of time, care and energy that makes a real difference to what we're able to do.

Thank you from everyone at the Trust to all our volunteers for your invaluable support!



A young volunteer supporting one of our events.

ON THE SIDE OF HUMANITY

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR MARTIN PARSONS

Professor Martin Parsons is an expert on the effects of conflict on children. He spoke to Robert Beaumont about his life and work.

There is a tragic irony in the timing of this interview with Prof. Martin Parsons which comes just days after the publication of the report by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, which documents harrowing child deaths in the conflict zones of the Middle East: his working life has been devoted to helping children who have been – and are – traumatised by war, and yet the news during the week in which we met seemed more burdened even than usual with stories of the horrific suffering of children.

In a world riven by conflict, objectivity can be an early casualty. Martin has somehow managed to preserve his impartiality throughout his long career and he is still able to assert, albeit somewhat wearily, that “The only side I am on is the side of humanity.”

It’s an assertion that, in fact, defines Martin’s life, a life dedicated to understanding, combatting and alleviating the suffering of children in war zones across the globe. He is universally acknowledged as one of the world pioneers in the study of the impact of war on children. As we sat talking in his pretty cottage in the village of Bradfield, near Reading, where he has lived with his wife Jo for the past 50 years, his love of children and his pain at their suffering underpins everything he says.

That is why he co-founded the magnificent charity Beyond Conflict (www.beyond-conflict.co.uk) with Edna Fernandes and why after years of selfless commitment, he had to step back from running the charity before stress, frustration and emotion broke him.

Martin explained: “Beyond Conflict is a global mental health charity for survivors of war, terrorism and displacement. We believe the mental health of every person matters. We aim to heal minds, change lives and restore hope. As a charity, we are non-aligned, helping people of all faiths and none. We are needed now more than ever.

“We believe there can be no enduring peace without addressing the psychological fallout of war. Our charity supports mental health projects for victims of war, as well as training for frontline workers in conflict zones. Since 2018, we have supported projects in Ukraine, Iraq, the Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh, the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza and Israel.

“We aim to make mental health a frontline humanitarian service and advocate for increased understanding and funding. We work via respected partners on the ground. We are supported by expert advisors and ambassadors, including our Founding Ambassador, the global humanitarian Sir Terry Waite.”

Significantly, Beyond Conflict’s supporters are diverse and global, including the family of John Lennon, the London Stock Exchange Group Foundation (LSEG), schools and religious institutions of all faiths. In 2025, Beyond Conflict was named by Acquisition International’s Non-Profit Organisation

Awards as International Humanitarian Mental Health Charity of the year and, in 2024, Best Mental Health Charity for Victims of War – UK.

“We aim to make mental health a frontline humanitarian service.”

Martin played a pivotal role in Beyond Conflict from before its inception in January 2018, having planning meetings with Edna over coffee at Paddington Station. However, the constant exposure to the suffering of children in war zones across the world, combined with frustration at the failure of so many global authorities to help in any meaningful way, ultimately proved overwhelming.

He recalled: “One day, watching television with my family and seeing innocent children once more being subjected to violence and terror, I broke down. My daughter Kimiko told me to take a step back from Beyond Conflict and I took her advice. There was no way I was going to turn my back on everything I had worked for and believed in, but I needed a break. I was emotionally and physically exhausted.”

Reflecting on his turmoil, Martin commented: “I cannot stress this enough. Who cares for the carer is fundamental to all charity work and should underpin it. Those involved must be aware of their own psychological and emotional weaknesses and what they may come up against when doing the work. There should be a support network in place for anyone working in the front line of mental health.”

Who cares for the carer chimes in perfectly with one of the key philosophies of the Charlie Waller Trust, whose primary aim is to help young people achieve and sustain better mental health. The Trust does this by equipping those closest to young people – families, friends, educators, communities and employers – with strategies and support based on the best available evidence. This takes the form of training and resources, and partnerships with schools, colleges, universities and community organisations, as well as work with parents, carers and other family members.

“I’m not being selfish when I say I needed care. I’m being realistic, as every carer will tell you. Obviously, exposure to the constant suffering of children is emotionally draining, but the frustration, not just with the warmongers, but also the authorities, is so debilitating. The powers that be have not listened in the past, and they are not listening now.

“There can be no enduring peace unless the psychological impact of war and displacement is addressed. We have always stated that in order to do something about the psychological impact of war on children the impact has to be understood. Unfortunately, many individuals and organisations, including the EU, are not taking the time to understand the multifaceted issues involved.”

“Who cares for the carer is fundamental to all charity work and should underpin it.”



Talking to this emotionally intelligent and intellectually rigorous man, who has done so much theoretically and practically to alleviate the suffering of children across the world, was profoundly moving. And I wondered what was the original catalyst for his lifetime's work?

Martin paused, taking a beat. Then: "I was born and brought up in Reading, a son of working-class parents. Dad worked for Huntley and Palmer and Mum was a school cleaner. I developed a love of history at an early age and managed to get a place at Reading School, the first member of my family ever to achieve that. As I became increasingly invested in history, I realised that people drive events, rather than the other way round, and the experiences of children are key to understanding this fascinating subject. This has underpinned all my history teaching and writing ever since."

A detailed study of the Second World War at school and at university saw him focus on the experiences of evacuees, leading to his first book on evacuation, the superb 'I'll Take That One', which was the definitive history of UK evacuation and the first book of its kind to investigate the myths surrounding the schemes. It is heavily quoted by eminent historians such as Juliet Gardiner (Britain at War) and was reviewed in The Times as their Book of the Week. This edition has now been superseded by 'I'll Take that One Too'. This latter version is now considered to be the seminal work on wartime evacuation and Martin is considered by many colleagues, both historians and psychologists, to be the expert on evacuation in wartime Britain and his advice is sought on a regular basis.

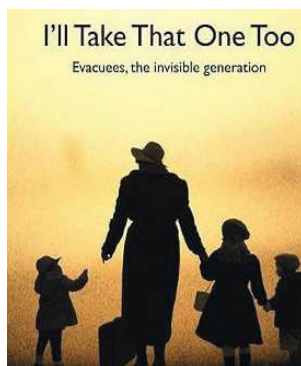
Now technically retired at 75, Martin is still as enthusiastic and intellectually curious and engaged as ever. Looking back on his academic life, one of his proudest achievements was the establishment of the Research Centre for Evacuee and War Child Studies at the University of Reading. He remains a Research Fellow and Honorary Life Fellow at the University of Reading and the University of Northampton.

Over time, he has carried out research into Operation Pied Piper [the World War Two evacuation plan], the establishment and effect of Evacuee Camp Schools, UK War Babies 1938-45 and, in collaboration with the University of Helsinki, the long-term effects of war-child separation – this research is presently being applied to the effects that the deployment to war zones of close family members has on many service children and on migrant children entering Europe.

It's time to draw our interview to a close. But, as I get up to leave, Martin has one last chilling story for me about the effect of war on children.

"During my research, I became friends with a woman, who shall remain nameless, who as a seven-year-old, survived a German concentration camp. How? She was herded into a gas chamber with the rest of her family, but the door wouldn't shut as the chamber was too full. A guard let her out. For the rest of her life the trauma, not to mention the guilt, never left her.

"So, when some people still say to me: 'Why bother doing this work? They are only children, so they will grow out of it', my response is an emphatic THEY DON'T".



Cover of the book 'I'll Take That One Too' by Professor Martin Parsons

"There can be no enduring peace unless the psychological impact of war and displacement is addressed."



THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

Our lived experience partners ensure the voices of young people and families are heard across our activity. Here's a brief round-up of some of their recent work.



The experience of parents, carers and other family members is essential to our work. We have a team of Parent Carer Lived Experience Partners and a Parent Carer Lived Experience Lead, who are involved in many aspects of our work, particularly as it relates to families.

This year, they worked closely with our Education Programme Manager and expert trainers to develop and deliver the Whole School Approach 'Train the Trainer' programme. This will enable more trainers to work with whole school communities on mental wellbeing, including staff, parents, carers and students.

Lived experience is a particularly important part of the Parent Carer Research Network, which we run in partnership with the University of Oxford. Designed to champion the voices of parents and carers in children and young

people's mental health research, it is guided by a steering group of parents and carers with lived experience.

The team continues to co-develop and co-deliver a number of our webinars and is working with the Youth Ambassador Lead to deliver workshops for the Trust's staff. These explore the principles and impact of co-production, helping staff embed co-productive approaches across the charity.

Their voice is heard literally too – Lived Experience Lead Nikki Chapman spoke powerfully at last year's London Carol Service about her experience as a parent of a child struggling with their mental health and the importance of parent carer peer support.

YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Our youth ambassadors play a significant role in the work of the Trust, bringing their varied individual expertise and their own lived experience. They offer guidance and recommendations about young people and their support systems from the viewpoints of young people themselves.

This year's cohort of seven youth ambassadors have been involved in a wide range of projects, making a significant contribution to our work. Examples include the creation and co-delivery of our webinars, which you can read more about on page 10. Not only does this ensure young people's voices are central to the content, it also means we feature the perspectives of young people who have lived experience of the topics, which range from Starting Secondary School to Neurodiversity and Mental Health.



Freya, one of our brilliant Youth Ambassadors, showing her support for Charlie Waller Trust and cheering on Team Charlie Waller Trust at the Reading Half Marathon!

One of our most recent new research collaborations is with the University of East Anglia (UEA) on supporting the roll-out of a sleep intervention for young people experiencing anxiety and depression alongside insomnia.

Sleep is a crucial element of mental health, especially for young people. Our ambassadors have worked closely with Dr Faith Orchard, reviewing resources and contributing actively to the research design steering group for her sleep project at UEA.

Behind the scenes, elsewhere in the Trust, the ambassadors have helped with quality assurance, reviewing training materials and communications for our fundraising appeals, as well as for the recruitment of two office-based roles for the Trust.

You can find out more about our lived experience partners on our website: charliewaller.org

FREE MENTAL HEALTH WEBINARS

We run live webinars for anyone who looks after children and young people – parents, carers, educators – as well as young people and anyone interested in mental health. The webinars explore practical, evidence-based strategies for maintaining positive mental health, whether that's paying attention to our own wellbeing or how to support those around us.

UPCOMING WEBINARS:

Thurs 8 October: Supporting young people's wellbeing online. Practical ideas and strategies to help young people develop healthier digital habits and support positive wellbeing.

Mon 19 October: Supporting young people with perfectionism. Supportive strategies to help young people develop self-compassion, resilience and a healthy sense of self-worth.

Save the date! Thurs 5 November

We are delighted that Professor Stella Chan will be presenting a webinar as part of our Making Knowledge Matter series based on mental health related research. Stella is Chair in Evidence-based Psychological Treatments at our sister organisation, the Charlie Waller Institute, based at the University of Reading.

To find out more and to sign up, visit charliewaller.org

Register



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF BOOK CLUB

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Charlie Waller Trust Book Club, during which time we have sent out nearly 15,000 books to schools and organisations working with children and young people.

The Book Club was set up to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by enhancing the skills, confidence and knowledge of those who work with them and providing them with resources to promote positive mental health. The books are provided to schools completely free.

A longstanding member, who is a school counsellor at a secondary school in Lancashire, said: "I love the Book Club. I have used some books individually in my counselling room, and some have gone to the school library, where they have been well used...All the books I have had from you have been brilliant. Thanks so much for what you do."

The majority of Book Club members are primary schools, but we also have secondary schools, counselling services, local authorities and youth organisations. The main contact is often the wellbeing lead, but it can be school nurses and counsellors and those in learning support and safeguarding roles.

We aim to send out one book per term, which we expect the organisation to add to their wellbeing library. Book numbers are limited based on costs and budget, so they're offered on a first come, first served basis. All the books chosen are evidence-based and have been clinically reviewed through The Reading Agency's Reading Well scheme.

One book in the year is aimed at primary school age children, which might be an

activity book with worksheets that can be copied, or one that can be read to the class or used in small groups. For example, last year we sent out 'Cheeky Worries', which helps younger children discuss their emotional worlds and worries.

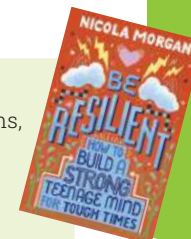
Another book is aimed at secondary-age pupils, which could include classroom activities or be used in small groups or learning support. This summer, we sent out 'How to Build a Strong Teenage Mind for Tough Times', which gives young people positive, practical advice for preparing for and coping with difficult times.

We also send books to develop the skills of staff working with children. For example, 'The A-Z of Trauma-Informed Teaching' gives staff strategies to help with the behaviour and learning of children who struggle in school settings.

The Club has grown in popularity over the last 10 years and now has over 600 members. With the increasing need to support children and young people's mental health, we want to extend our reach so more schools and youth organisations can take part.

We are fortunate to have had funding for Book Club, most recently from the Foyle Foundation, and from the de Laszlo Foundation, for which we are very grateful.

If you are in touch with any schools or other youth organisations, do please let them know about our Book Club. To find out more, please visit charliewaller.org/what-we-offer/schools/book-club



BOOK REVIEW

WHEN TEENS SELF-HARM

by Monika Parkinson, Kerstin Thirlwall and Lucy Willetts

Written by three accomplished clinical psychologists, this practical book guides the reader through ways of supporting young people who self-harm.

Here, it is reviewed by a Charlie Waller trainer, a parent with lived experience of supporting a young person with mental health issues, and one of our youth ambassadors.

A young person's view

This book is a short, accessible guide for parents, teachers and professionals supporting young people who self-harm. At just over 100 pages, it is easy to read and thoughtfully structured, with chapters that can be dipped into individually. This makes it particularly helpful for busy adults who want clear guidance without feeling overwhelmed.

One of the most impactful elements is the way the book opens straight away with a quote from a young person. It is hard-hitting and immediately sets an emotionally honest tone. Rather than beginning with statistics or theory, the authors centre lived experience, grounding the reader in the reality of what self-harm can feel like for a teenager.

Early on, they briefly acknowledge the link between self-harm and suicide, before explaining why the focus of the book remains specifically on self-harm. This feels calm and considered, helping to reduce alarm while still recognising the seriousness of the issue.

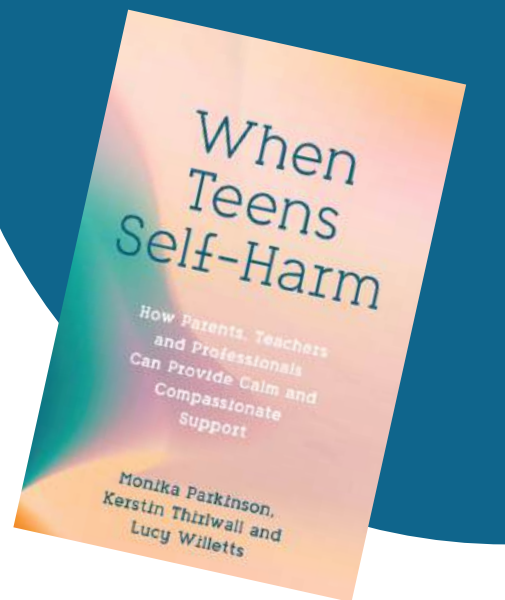
From panic to curiosity

Throughout, the book encourages adults to move from panic to curiosity. In Part One, the authors reassure readers that "you are not alone, even GPs are often stumped as to why a young person is doing this..." This line feels validating and realistic. It recognises that confusion is common and gently shifts the emphasis towards understanding the emotions behind the behaviour rather than rushing to fix it. Quotes from young people and short scenarios appear throughout, helping the reader look beneath the surface and reflect on what feelings may be driving self-harm.

Helpful structure

Another real strength is the structure of the book itself. Each chapter ends with a highlighted box summarising key takeaways in bullet points, followed by reflective questions. These sections encourage readers to pause and consider how the ideas apply to their own context, rather than simply reading and moving on. The appendix also includes recommended resources, which feels like a thoughtful addition to anyone wanting to explore the topic further or signpost families to additional support.

Overall, this is a compassionate, practical and genuinely informative read. It feels calm,



grounded and equipping, offering reassurance alongside clear and usable guidance for those supporting young people who self-harm.

Holly W

Charlie Waller Youth Ambassador

A parent's view

The book starts with a discussion about what self-harm is. Not just a quick list or a dictionary definition but an explanation from a parent's perspective, which is excellent. When I work with parents, I say "put yourself in their shoes for one minute and think how all that overwhelming stress feels to a young person", and that's what this book does.

The book then addresses the 'elephant in the room' – suicide – and the fact that self-harm is not a suicide attempt; that's so important. Self-harm is a way of coping and staying alive and the book sets out why it should not be stopped, except in very severe cases where major harm is a risk. This helps alleviate the fear that self-harm leads to suicide. Equally, the book doesn't dismiss suicide but gives practical guidance and resources.

"Throughout, the book encourages adults to move from panic to curiosity."

Statistics and references

One issue for me, particularly listening to the audio version, was all the referencing in the text, which I found distracting. Maybe a key with footnotes would work better.

I also have a concern about the use of statistics. In Chapter 2, a statistic is given to show that neurodivergent teens seem to be at greater risk of self-harming. It cites a report finding that the incidence of self-harm in hospital emergency departments was three times higher for boys with autism than for neurotypical boys. I think the reality is that girls are just as likely to be admitted so this could be misleading.

Perhaps the authors could have made the point, even if there are not statistics to support it, that we know the same is true for girls, even if autism has not been formally diagnosed.

Responding helpfully

In the section on helpful responding, I liked the emphasis on tone and body language. There are examples of how to respond calmly, with real life scenarios I found useful, particularly because, being neurodivergent, my brain can understand them better.

Self-care, safety and validation

For me, the best chapter is the one on regulating your own emotions and reactions. It's amazing. Some books cover self-care in one sentence. Here, there's a whole chapter. I always say to parents, you can't pour from an empty cup – looking after yourself is absolutely vital.

I was very pleasantly surprised that the section on providing a safe home focused on not stopping the young person from self-harm and on being guided by them for alternatives. They also covered the common problem of a parent wanting to fix the situation, and gave great examples of the difference between a fixing conversation and a listening, validating conversation. I thought some of these were a bit artificial, but I understood the meaning behind them and even used them in an actual conversation with my teenage son. It worked!



Key takeaways

Parents don't always have time to read a whole book, so I liked the key takeaways and reflective questions at the end of each chapter.

The final overview offers a brilliant summary, giving parents hope and understanding.

The resources are helpful, and I loved the fact that Charlie Waller Trust was in there!

They also signpost to places like the British Psychology Society, where you can find appropriately registered therapists.

One final point: the authors talk about the work they've done with children and families and what they learned from these conversations; it would be interesting to know whether there was any actual collaboration in putting the book together. Overall, though, this is the best book on self-harm I've read.

Jeanne Blair

Parent Carer Peer Support (PCPS) Lived Experience Partner

"Parents don't always have time to read a whole book, so I liked the key takeaways and reflective questions at the end of each chapter."

A mental health trainer's view

Overall, I thought this was an excellent book. At just 100 pages and concisely written, it can be read very quickly. It's aimed at a broad audience – parents, teachers and professionals – but I feel it's helpfully done when we consider a significant number of teachers and professionals will themselves be parents.

The structure is simple: an introduction to self-harm, helpful responding, providing nurturing environments and practical strategies. Each chapter can be read in isolation, and each one ends with some key takeaways, for example 'Self-harm is usually a way to manage distressing feelings', and questions for reflection, for example 'What difficult feelings do you think your child might be having?'

Given that this book is explicitly about self-harm, I like that it addresses the link between self-harm and suicide in the introduction, and then makes no further mention of suicide and focuses solely on supporting young people who are self-harming.

Managing emotions

From the beginning of the book, there is a strong emphasis on emotion, which aligns with our approach at the Charlie Waller Trust. The authors make clear that in their clinical experience, the common driver for self-harming behaviour is to cope with and manage difficult or overwhelming feelings. They also stress that self-harm will only stop when the young person feels willing and able and they describe how to manage that.

Importantly, the book devotes a whole chapter to the person supporting the young person and how to manage their own emotions. It stresses the importance of self-care (physically, mentally and 'spiritually' – by which they mean ways to uplift yourself and find joy) and how modelling good self-care can set a strong example for the young person. It's this sort of content that makes the book feel practical and equipping.

The book also includes quotes from young people and presents scenarios for consideration, sometimes with two possible ways of dealing with the situation.

Practical advice

Practical advice continues throughout the book. For example, there is a chapter for parents and carers on making home feel a safe space, with some great suggestions on how to do that. Generally, I think the practical suggestions are good. However, within the 'displacement activities' section, it suggests 'have a very hot or cold shower and exfoliate vigorously'. I'm familiar with the cold shower suggestion but I've not come across very hot showers or vigorous exfoliation, and I personally wouldn't feel comfortable suggesting them as I would worry that both have potential real harms of their own.

My only other criticism is that although the book was published in 2024, it has some dated references going back more than 10 years. This is frustrating, especially around prevalence of self-harm, as more recent statistics are available. That said, the self-harm overview is relatively brief, and not the primary focus of the book.

Rachel Welch

Mental Health Trainer, Education Programme

FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS

Thank you
to all our
supporters

It's been a fantastic year of fundraising so far. There's been a wonderful mix of events and challenges and also our first comedy night – Laugh Out Loud for Mental Health – held locally to our office in Newbury. It was such a success that we're repeating it on 25 March 2027.

Corporate partnerships are immensely important to us; as well as welcoming some new partners, I'd like to thank CV Villas and Jules Verne for their wonderful support over the last two years. If your company would be interested in partnering with us, please get in touch.

Gifts in wills are also an important source of support for our work and we had a great response to our free will writing service. We'll be running the offer again during Free Wills Month this October – find out more on page 11.

Looking ahead to the festive season, there are some great ways you can support our work, including buying our Christmas cards (see page 29) and coming to our carol services. And do look out for our Big Give Christmas Appeal: running from 1 – 8 December, this is an excellent opportunity for raising awareness as well as much-needed income, with donations doubled thanks to some generous matched funding.

Thank you so much for supporting our crucial work on young people's mental health. It simply wouldn't be possible without you.

NICK APPLEBY
HEAD OF FUNDRAISING
AND COMMUNICATIONS



LAUGH OUT LOUD FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Our first venture into comedy was a great success, with the audience most certainly 'laughing out loud' at the Newbury Corn Exchange. The evening was presented by our patron Alexander Armstrong and hosted by Alex Farrow, with entertaining comedy provided by Rachel Fairburn, Joe Wells, Robert White and David Alfie Ward. The evening raised £7,700.

Save the date for another great evening of comedy: 25 March 2027

ANDREW ROBSON BRIDGE DAY

Hosted by renowned expert Andrew Robson, this wonderful event raised £6,400.

We would like to thank Lord and Lady Benyon for their incredible generosity in allowing it to be held in the magnificent Long Gallery at Englefield House.



Alexander Armstrong and Joe Stilgoe on stage at the Charlie Waller Trust's Laugh Out Loud for Mental Health event at the Corn Exchange, Newbury.

READING HALF MARATHON

It was our first year as a bronze charity partner for this event, allowing more volunteers to get involved. 12 people ran for us, raising £5,085. The volunteers helped as marshals, cheered on the runners and provided support in the race village. They included members of staff, freelancers, friends and family, and all agreed that a highlight was meeting the runners and seeing how much they appreciated the support.

CADOGAN HALL CONCERT

In April, an audience of nearly 600 was treated to a performance of Bach's phenomenal Mass in B Minor. It was sung by Vox Cordis choir, who have performed for us many times under the baton of longstanding supporter Charlie Grace. They were joined by the Aurum Vocale Instrumental Collective and five outstanding soloists. The concert raised £43,613.



TEXAS SCRAMBLE

20 teams took part in our 28th Texas Scramble at Badgemore Park Golf Club in May, raising £16,255. Andy Grant, captain of the winning team, said: "We recently lost a friend and colleague to suicide and it is so important that charities like the Charlie Waller Trust are supported in their efforts to raise awareness of something that is too often not spoken about and impacts the young and old in equal measure.

"I cannot recommend the day enough if you enjoy a fun round of golf with wonderful people on a fantastic course. We will be back to defend the trophy next year – not least as I have to return it! Well done to the Charlie Waller Trust and long may this be a day in the calendar."



Keen supporter Kevin Jones, who ran the London Marathon and Reading Half Marathon for us this year with son Luke Jones.

THE LONDON MARATHON

We were fortunate to have 12 people running this most famous marathon for us, raising £40,000. In last year's newsletter, we featured Molly, who ran the marathon to recognise the vital help the Trust had given her parents when she was struggling with an eating disorder. This year, it was the turn of her boyfriend, George Ledger-Humphrey, to pick up the baton, raising £2,442.

He said: "Inspired by the care she received, Molly ran the London Marathon, raising over £4,000 for the Trust – an achievement that inspired me to continue that legacy."

BRADFELD CRICKET TOURNAMENT

Thanks, as ever, to Bradfield College, Berkshire, for hosting this ever-popular event in May, which raised just over £7,000. Max Jardine-Brown, captain of the winning team, gave us this account of the day:

"The Charlie Waller cricket day is an absolute highlight every year; this was my seventh as a player, but my debut for the Flying Boatmen. We were involved in the wash-out of 2024 and so were delighted it was a scorcher! Having been 40-6 in the opener we were pretty chuffed to scrape through to play

the Gussets (captained by Trust Chairman, Richard Waller) in the semis, then his son Sam's team in the final.

"The whole day is just brilliant – breakfast baps after the first game, only to be overshadowed by the delicious lunch, when you almost forget you're playing cricket! It's a great setting, Bradfield, and being able to play on such fantastic pitches is a real treat – we loved coming back to the pav after each game to find out what happened in all the matches, especially from those who talked a big game!"

"I've been very close to the Charlie Waller Trust all my life but it was great for the lads in my team to learn all about it and speak with [founders] Mark and Rachel Waller – the main point of the day was definitely not lost on them. Nevertheless, some serious cricket was played and in great spirit. Massive thank you to everyone who helped make the day happen – there is no doubt the Flying Boatmen will be back next year to retain the trophy!"

NEON DISCO

Almost 300 children in Years 7 and 8 descended on the beautiful grounds of the Englefield Estate in July for an evening of fun and friendship. From the DJ and glow bar to the Hollywood make-up station and endless pick n' mix, there was something for everyone. The evening raised over £18,100.

Thank you to Lord and Lady Benyon for allowing us to hold the disco in their grounds, to our headline sponsors Middleton Advisors and Fowler Architecture and Planning, and to the organising committee: Zoe Benyon, Jane Bevan, Maryn Oppenheim, Clare Pannell, Francesca Penn, Annabel Tregoning and Anna Wakeham.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

It's a real privilege to be chosen as an organisation's Charity of the Year. These partnerships mean so much to us, both in terms of fundraising and raising awareness of the Trust and our vital work.

We're delighted to announce two new partnerships: one with the **University of Reading**, where we are excited to have been chosen by staff as the University's Charity of the Year, and the other with the **Flat Iron Trust**. Their restaurant teams were asked to choose a charity within the health sector that addresses issues with a significant impact on local communities.

OUR BIG GIVE CHRISTMAS APPEAL 1 – 8 DEC: TOGETHER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH

Our Christmas Appeal will raise funds to provide more families and organisations with training and resources to support children with mental health difficulties, especially those waiting for professional help.

Thanks to match-funding, donations during the week will be doubled. Please spread the word!



We're so grateful to everyone who raises funds for our vital work. A few more highlights:

MOLLY THE MOUNTAINEER

Massive congratulations to 11-year-old Molly Wiggan who climbed Ben Nevis with her dad Andy, raising £1,484. Molly said: "I have a close friend who experienced severe mental health problems and it made me realise how important a charity like this is."



Molly Wiggan

SKIING UPHILL

Longstanding supporter Lizzie Orange, star of our front cover, completed a ski tour from Zermatt to Klein Matterhorn, a gruelling ascent of 2,283 metres, and raised £10,906. Lizzie took the challenge on to support the fundraising efforts of Alex Bass-Phillips who ran the London Marathon for us.

PROVENCE IRONMAN

Eli, Olie and Andrew completed the Provence Ironman in memory of Eli's dear friend Charlie, raising over £10,000.

HUNTERCOMBE GOLF DAY

Huntercombe Golf Club hosted a pro-celebrity golf day, raising nearly £25,000, and club member Tim Batstone raised over £6,000 from his Everest challenge.

LONDON LANDMARKS HALF-MARATHON

Five runners took part, raising £4,300. Niamh ran in memory of a friend who died by suicide; the others, Paul, Warryn, Seraade and Alvaro, are colleagues at Bloomsbury Holiday Inn – continuing the brilliant support from Imperial Group Hotels.

CLUB FEST

The Newbury Club Bar and Lounge chose us as one of the charity partners for their ClubFest. The day of live music from local talent raised £778 for us

PEDAL POWER

Richard Levell, Director of Clinical Training at our sister organisation, the Charlie Waller Institute, cycled from John O'Groats to Land's End, raising over £2,000. He said: "Knowing we were shining a light on Charlie's legacy and raising vital funds is what got me up those 15 percent gradients in 35 degrees!"

Meanwhile, young cyclists Laurie (11), Sam (13) and Tom (13), rode 441km from Little Bedwyn to Paris, mainly off-road, raising £5,932.

OVERBURY QUIZ

We were enormously grateful to be chosen again as a beneficiary charity by the hugely successful Overbury Charity Quiz. We were thrilled to receive a cheque for £28,750.

A LITERARY PRIZE

The Tom Grass Spirit of Adventure Literary Prize was set up in memory of writer and traveller Tom Grass, who died by suicide in 2024. The foundation kindly raises money for the Trust, a marvellous £3,250 to date

TRINITY SCHOOL

Pupils in 9D1 chose the Trust as their charity in the Trinity School First Give competition. They organised a staff football match and a tuck shop and, with matched funding, raised £1,400. Our CEO, Dr Hannah Vickery, was delighted to attend the awards ceremony.

FROM STORES TO STONES

Jo Preston from Childrey Stores came first in her age category in the 50.4k Race to the Stones, raising £4,663.

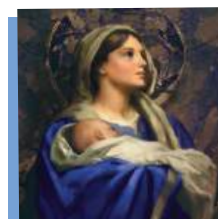
HACKNEY HALF

Tally Watt ran the Hackney Half Marathon in May in memory of one of her closest friends and raised £2,200.

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

Here at the Trust, we have our own festive traditions. Highlights include our Christmas card selections (see below) and our ever-popular carol services in London and Bradfield (see page 30).

NEW 2026 CARD DESIGNS



Blessed Madonna
Pack of 10
£5.00



Peace and Love
Pack of 10
£4.50



Postbox Robins
Pack of 10
£4.50

CARD COLLECTIONS



Madonna and child collection
3 Packs of 10
£8.00



Festive collection
2 Packs of 10
3 different designs
£5.00



Classic collection
2 Packs of 10
£5.00

TAKE A LOOK ONLINE

You can view all our designs in our online shop, along with our Advent candle and children's Advent Activity Book.

Please note that postage is an additional cost. Orders are packed by volunteers twice a week and sent by second class post so please allow at least 7-10 business days for delivery.

To order cards, please visit
shop.charliewaller.org/collections/christmas-cards-and-calendar
or call 01635 869754
Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm

Scan for all things Christmas!



What's on

These are the events we have planned for 2026 and early 2027. Please bear in mind they may be subject to change and keep an eye on our website for updates.

2026

Sat 10 October WALK FOR WELLBEING

Berkshire

Mark World Mental Health Day with our Walk for Wellbeing Berkshire Challenge. Join fellow supporters on our 16-mile walk through the beautiful Berkshire countryside raising vital funds for young people's mental health.

Weds 28 October ECLIPSE DISCO

Stone Barn, Gloucestershire
A Halloween-themed disco for Years 7 and 8 to party the night away at the stunning Stone Barn in the Cotswolds.

Weds 11 November QUIZ NIGHT

St Columba's Hall, London
Our annual quiz returns, giving you the chance to battle to be the Charlie Waller quiz champions.

Tue 1 December BRADFIELD CAROL SERVICE

Bradfield College, Berkshire
A wonderful way to bring in the season with carols from Bradfield College and Elstree Chapel Choirs and festive readings from celebrity guests.



Mon 7 December LONDON CAROL SERVICE

St Luke's Church, Chelsea
Join us for our hugely popular and wonderfully festive evening of candlelit carols and celebrity readers.

2027

Mon 1 – Sun 7 February CHARLIE WALLER TRUST ONLINE ART AUCTION

Building on the success of our 2025 Art Exhibition at the Mall Galleries, our 2027 Online Art Auction will feature around 170 works by 65 talented artists. It will celebrate creativity and raise vital funds to support both the artists and our work.

Thurs 18 February ANDREW ROBSON BRIDGE DAY

Englefield House, Berkshire
Andrew Robson OBE is England's best known bridge player. A great day of bridge and a delicious lunch.

Thurs 27 February U18 LACROSSE TOURNAMENT

Marlborough College, Wiltshire
Invitational event hosted by the college for schools' U18 lacrosse teams.

Sun 14 March CAMBRIDGE HALF MARATHON

One of the UK's most iconic races through the historic streets and beautiful university grounds of Cambridge.

Sun 14 March RUN SOUTH LONDON

A closed road half marathon, this is set to become a standout feature of London's running calendar.

Please see our website for event tickets, entry forms and more information, or contact us
01635 869754
fundraising@charliewaller.org

Sun 21 March READING HALF MARATHON AND READING MINI MARATHON

Experience the highlights of Reading and its university grounds with huge crowd support and a stadium finish. The Mini Marathon is a fun 3km race for children aged 4–17. Or join our team of wonderful volunteers to marshal the route and cheer on the runners!

Thurs 25 March LAUGH OUT LOUD

Newbury Corn Exchange, Berks
Following our successful launch in 2026, we're back with an evening of laughter! Comedian line-up coming soon.

Sun 25 April



LONDON MARATHON

If you have a ballot place, we would love you to raise funds for us! We're also looking for volunteers to cheer on Team Charlie Waller on the day.

Weds 19 May TEXAS SCRAMBLE

Badgemore Park Golf Club, Henley-on-Thames
Teams of four are invited to compete at this renowned golf club and enjoy a delicious lunch.

Laugh out loud for mental health!

25 March 2027



Join us to Laugh Out Loud for Mental Health
Newbury Corn Exchange

Scan to find out more



Become a Friend of Charlie Waller and support young people's mental health.

Right now, thousands of young people are struggling with their mental health. Behind them are thousands of families desperate to help but not knowing where to turn.

By becoming a Friend of Charlie Waller and making a regular donation, you'll help us give families, teachers and communities the skills and confidence they need to support young people.

75% of mental health problems are established by age 24. Getting help early on is vital. That's exactly what our training and resources are designed to do and it can make a hugely positive difference to a young person's life.

"I'm proud to have cycled from Land's End to John o' Groats a few years ago to raise funds for [the Charlie Waller Trust] and am myself a regular donor."

"I've also used and recommended their resources a number of times. They are a great charity, their work is incredibly important, and I'd encourage anyone who can afford it to consider becoming a donor."

Tanya Velling, Friend of Charlie Waller

Visit charliewaller.org/get-involved/friends-of-charlie-waller
email fundraising@charliewaller.org
or call 01635 869754

Please help us spread the word!

Scan to find out more



FIND THE CHALLENGE FOR YOU!

We have partnered with Run for Charity, which gives us access to over 500 runs and challenge events. Why not take a look and find just the challenge for you?
charliewaller.org/our-events/find-the-challenge-for-you

LOOKING FOR HELP?

As we don't provide clinical help to individuals, we have listed below some organisations which offer direct advice if you are concerned about anyone's mental health.

SAMARITANS **116 123**

For confidential emotional support
24/7

YOUNG MINDS **PARENTS' HELPLINE** **0808 802 5544**

For parents concerned about their
child's emotional problems or
behaviour

NHS 111 **111**

For help and reassurance 24/7
when it is less urgent than 999

SHOUT **Text 85258**

Free, confidential text messaging
service for anyone struggling to cope

NHS URGENT MENTAL **HEALTH HELPLINES** **nhs.uk/service-search/ mental-health/find-an- urgent-mental-health- helpline**

Help to find a local NHS urgent mental
health helpline in England

BACBP **bacbp.com**

For a register of accredited therapists

BACP **bacp.co.uk**

For a directory of registered/accredited
therapists

CHILDLINE **0800 11 11**

If you're under 19 you can
confidentially call, chat online or
email about any problem big or small.
Available 24/7

HUB OF HOPE **hubofhope.co.uk**

A comprehensive directory of mental
health support services local to you
based on your postcode

Inclusion here does not mean the Charlie Waller Trust recommends or endorses any of these organisations above others, nor can we guarantee that the organisation will have a solution for your particular experience. All details correct at time of going to press.

Mental health resources

Free guides and workbooks for professionals, parents, young people and others interested in mental wellbeing.

All resources are available as free downloads, and some are available as printed copies.

Visit charliewaller.org/resources where you'll also find lots more information on mental health and wellbeing.



The Charlie Waller Trust

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The Charlie Waller Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales 1109984.
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Registered address: as above.



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