



Shining a light(saber) on youth spaces: John Boyega teams up with Amazon and youth charity OnSide to deliver smiles to young people this Christmas

December 8, 2022

New research¹, commissioned by Amazon, reveals Gen Z are in a 'permacrisis' with a lack of suitable places to go for support at a time when two-thirds (69%) cite the cost of living crisis as their biggest concern

Hollywood star, Star Wars actor, and south Londoner, John Boyega, gives members of OnSide's Legacy Youth Zone in Croydon the surprise of their life as he helps Amazon fulfil the venue's Wish List of items from clothing to Kindles, to sports equipment and kitchen supplies

Amazon has committed products, funds, and programming to OnSide to support its network of Youth Zones helping 50,000 young people across the UK - visit amazon.co.uk/deliveringasmiles to learn more

LONDON - 8th December, 2022: Amazon has teamed up with youth charity [OnSide](#) - which builds, opens, and maintains a national network of state-of-the-art Youth Zones. Amazon has committed products, funds, and programming to OnSide and the 50,000 young people across the UK using these centres. The organisations are teaming up to highlight the need for investment in spaces for people under 25 - including revealing a new report called the "Youth Space Access Report and Index". This new research, commissioned by Amazon, shows almost half (49%) of young adults interviewed nationwide feel there are too few free places for them to go at a time when two-thirds (69%) cite the cost of living crisis as their biggest concern. With help from Star Wars actor John Boyega, Amazon kicked off this ongoing relationship with OnSide by fulfilling the Wish List for [Legacy](#), OnSide's Youth Zone in Croydon, delivering their needs ahead of the Christmas holiday.

John Boyega x Amazon: Deliver a Christmas Surprise in Croydon

BAFTA award winner and star of the recent blockbuster, *The Woman King*, John Boyega, who grew up on a council estate in South London, paid a surprise visit to [Legacy](#), OnSide's Youth Zone in Croydon and helped deliver Amazon's Christmas gift. The Legacy youth workers and young people created their own Wish Lists on Amazon including Amazon devices like Kindles to supercharge the library, as well as Amazon Fire HD Tablets and Echo Dots (5th generation). The teams also received a PlayStation 5 and controllers for gamers; microphones and keyboards for the music studio; 3D printer; hair and beauty products for the beauty space; art and craft materials for the art room; DSLR cameras and kit for photography tutorials; weights for Legacy's gym, and a range of sport equipment from golf nets and putting sets, to basketballs and a go-kart to inspire the next generations of sports stars. Amazon also provided gifts for each attendee to take home, as well as food from Amazon Fresh for the special night.

To the delight of those in attendance, the Star Wars actor revealed the oversized Christmas gift from Amazon, and more importantly spoke to the attendees about his journey from *The Big Smoke* to the big screen. Boyega's story demonstrates the importance of young people having access to safe, vibrant youth spaces, where the actor found his passion through a hyper-local after-school drama project.

While spending the evening at Legacy Youth Zone, John Boyega was also shown around the Youth Zone's facilities by its members and youth workers including listening to a track-recording in the music studio, taking in a training session at the zone's boxing ring, and helping to cook up a storm in the on-site training kitchen. See John Boyega give young people in Croydon a day to remember at amazon.co.uk/deliveringasmiles.

John Boyega, actor, said: "We didn't have a lot of money when I was growing up so I know how important it is to have free spaces and activities outside of the home. I was lucky that I had my father's church and a local community drama group at Theatre Peckham, so I had places to go, and opportunities to dream. That's why places like Legacy Youth Zone in Croydon are so important for the next generation - we just need more of them, all across the country so young people have a safe space to be themselves and have the opportunity to discover their passions in life, just as I did."

Introducing the UK's Youth Space Access Index

Boyega's visit comes as Amazon reveals a new "Youth Space Access Index". This ranks local authorities by their access to youth spaces² for young people (aged 13-25) in England. The Index revealed that Norfolk is the worst affected local authority, with stark deprivation of appropriate spaces for young adults seen across the east of England. North East and South East regions each have three areas named in the list as well. This research into the state of the nation's youth spaces highlights the need for investment and informs Amazon's work with OnSide, who are providing state-of-the-art facilities in some of the UK's most economically disadvantaged areas.

John Boumphrey, Amazon UK Country Manager, said: "Young people are at risk of becoming this century's lost generation as they live through a cost-of-living crisis, while still reeling from the global pandemic. We were inspired by OnSide's mission to have a life-changing impact on this generation. Our team at Amazon has committed products, funds, and programming to OnSide for their network of inspiring Youth Zones supporting 50,000 young people across the UK. This is part of our wider commitment to act as a force for good in the communities where we operate, and we're proud to have worked with over 10,000 organisations across the UK in the last 12 months alone, that also focus on young people."

Amazon x OnSide: Here for Young People

Insights from Amazon's research into the state of the nation's youth spaces will inform ongoing support and programming from Amazon at OnSide Youth Zones across the UK in 2022 and beyond. Amazon's work with OnSide involves financial support, product donations and ongoing programming which will help give young people around the country access to inspiring people across Amazon's workforce and network through volunteering schemes. Amazon locations across the UK are linking up with individual Youth Zones which are part of OnSide's network to support their unique needs at a local level, from fundraising support to product donations, volunteering to mentorship.

Jamie Masraff, incoming Chief Executive, OnSide, said, "Every young person deserves access to safe, inspiring spaces, where they can discover their passions and their purpose. Youth Zones offer many thousands of young people in communities nationwide a chance to have fun, make friends and try new things all with help from trusted youth workers - vital support which builds self-esteem and resilience, laying the foundations for them to thrive into adulthood. Working with organisations like Amazon means that we can help many more young people access the benefits of incredible youth work, within Youth Zones designed to meet their needs."

Not just for Christmas: A Programme of Support for Young People

The initiative is part of a wider programme of support for young people through financial and product donations and Amazon has helped more than 10,000 organisations in the past 12 months that support young people in the UK. This includes Prime Video Pathway, a £10 million pledge across three years to support training and development in the UK TV and Film Industry, and an initiative with In Kind Direct, supported 266 charities who work in youth care. Last month, Amazon also supported Comic Relief's Cost of Living Christmas Appeal to support people in the UK who are living in incredibly difficult circumstances.

Visit amazon.co.uk/deliveringmiles to learn more about Amazon's work with OnSide, its wider support for young people across the UK and how to support OnSide by shopping through AmazonSmile.

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High res images can be found [here](#)

"Youth Spaces Access Index" infographic can be found [here](#)

About Amazon

Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Amazon strives to be Earth's Most Customer-Centric Company, Earth's Best Employer, and Earth's Safest Place to Work. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalised recommendations, Prime, Fulfilment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Career Choice, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, Alexa, Just Walk Out technology, Amazon Studios, and The Climate Pledge are some of the things pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit amazon.co.uk/about and follow @AmazonNewsUK.

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About OnSide

OnSide is a national charity that believes all young people should have the opportunity to discover their passion and their purpose. We fund and build state-of-the-art, multimillion-pound Youth Zones in the country's most economically disadvantaged areas. We train the amazing people that run them. We offer continuing support – and the nationwide OnSide Network where they can learn and grow, share and celebrate their success together.

Youth Zones are brand new, purpose-built spaces fizzing with energy, and crammed with incredible facilities. They offer 20 activities each night ranging from football, climbing and media to skating, DJ-ing, drama and employability training with entry costing just 50p along with a £5 membership. They are staffed by skilled and dedicated youth workers who truly believe in young people – helping them see what they could achieve, and giving them the skills, confidence and ambition to go for it.

Over 50,000 young people are already members across the OnSide network at our 14 Youth Zones – with a number of other Youth Zones are currently at different stages of development including Grimsby, Hammersmith & Fulham and Barnsley.

Each Youth Zone is an independent charity with its own private sector-led board. This model of local ownership is a key factor in ensuring the financial sustainability of each Youth Zone. The Youth Zone provides a way for local communities to actively support their young people between the age of 8 and 19 (25 for those with additional needs). Visit www.onsideyouthzones.org for more details.

About Legacy Youth Zone

Croydon Youth Zone named 'Legacy' by young people is an inspiring state-of-the-art leisure facility for young people aged 8 – 19 (or up to 25 for those with additional needs). It provides a safe, inclusive, exciting place for all young people, regardless of their background, ability or household income offering membership for £5 per year and 50p per visit. Legacy has an extensive range of facilities allowing members to participate in a range of positive, inspiring and constructive activities. It is a place where young people will grow and develop. It provides opportunities in the form of the three things they want – somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to. Visit: www.legacyyouthzone.org.

¹ Research was conducted by [Beatfreaks](#), a creative insight and engagement agency specialising in working with young and diverse voices, in November 2022. The report reflects survey responses from 1000 16-25 year olds from across the UK, and field work including focus groups and professional interviews. The report represents a broad range of views from respondents across the UK, including those young people who have experienced youth spaces and services, and those who had not.

² In order to identify "youth spaces", the following definition was used: any location in which open access youth clubs are held that is directly operated by the LA, funded by the LA, or signposted on the LA's website, but excluding uniformed activities (e.g. Scouts & Guides),