



UNITAS UPDATE

QUARTERLY UPDATE
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024



UNITAS IMPACT: EXTENDING BEYOND OUR WALLS

A Message from our Chief Executive

ROBIN MOSS

As we close out another remarkable year at Unitas Youth Zone, I am filled with immense pride reflecting on the achievements and milestones we've reached together. From vibrant community celebrations to empowering young leaders, we continue to demonstrate the power of a safe, inclusive, and inspiring space for young people across North London and beyond.

This quarter, we celebrated the richness of our diverse community through events like Black History Month and our Winter Wonderland. These moments remind us of the vital role Unitas plays in bringing people together, fostering connections, and celebrating the incredible talents of our young members.

We also marked significant milestones in our Young Leaders programme, equipping the next generation with the skills and confidence to shape their futures and positively influence their communities. Their growth is proof of the transformative power of investing in young people.

The impact of Unitas extends far beyond our walls

From the dedication of our volunteers to the recognition of exceptional individuals like Janaki Allen (see page 6), October to December 2024 has been a celebration of the people who make Unitas what it is, a place where potential is realised, futures are shaped, and communities are strengthened.

Looking ahead, we are gearing up for the 2025 **London Without Limits** crowdfunding campaign, an incredible opportunity to raise the vital funds we need to continue our work. I invite you to join us in this effort to ensure every young person has access to the support and opportunities they deserve.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Unitas family. **Together**, we are creating a brighter, more inclusive future for our young people and our community

What's been on at Unitas

Celebrating Black History Month

On Saturday 26 October, Unitas Youth Zone welcomed over 420 visitors to celebrate Black History Month with a day of culture and connection. Highlights included drumming by One Drum Africa, spoken word poetry, African mask-making, traditional foods, and the "Climb Kilimanjaro" challenge. The Black In White Poetry Competition 2024 Awards and Book Launch featured live performances, an open mic, and special guests. Events like these showcase Unitas' mission to inspire and unite the community in a safe, inclusive space.



Enjoying the diversity of our team

This year, our team marked Diwali in style with vibrant decorations, delicious food, and a warm glow from lit divas and tea lights. The highlight of the celebration was a lively Bollywood dance class, filled with standout moves, a few questionable ones, and plenty of laughter, bringing everyone together in the true spirit of the festival.



Winter Wonderland

Although the weather outside was frightful, the atmosphere at our Winter Wonderland event was truly delightful!

We welcomed 570 attendees, making it one of our best-attended events yet! Each corner of Unitas was buzzing with festive spirit and exciting activities for everyone to enjoy. One of the highlights was our magical Santa's Grotto, where children received special gifts, thanks to our partnership with Burberry. Guests enjoyed hot chocolate as they watched performances by our talented young members, spreading holiday joy throughout the space. They also got to take part in our raffle with prizes such as a luxurious overnight stay at The Grove Golf and Spa Hotel and cases of fine wine, generously donated by Morgan Sindall.

If you are interested in partnering with us, contact us at fundraising@unitasyouthzone.org



Empowering future leaders

We're obsessed with equipping young people with the tools to shape their futures and influence the world around them. Our Young Leaders programme involves our young people in the running of our charity, amplifying their voices, and empowering them to make meaningful decisions for their peers.

This quarter, we celebrated the graduation of our second cohort of Juniors Young Leaders

They've shadowed staff in different areas, learning first-hand about the dedication and effort that goes into making Unitas a safe and inspiring place for young people

The programme ran for eight sessions over 10 weeks, culminating in a heartwarming graduation ceremony

"Being a Young Leader has been an amazing experience. I've learned so much about teamwork and leadership, but also about myself. Representing Unitas at events made me feel proud, and I know the skills I've gained will help me in the future."



Representing at the 2024 Lord Mayor's Show



Beyond learning, our Young Leaders have stepped up as ambassadors for Unitas, representing us at community events such as [The Lord Mayor's Parade](#).

We're super proud not only of the incredible effort of Unitas' young members' contribution to our amazing float, but also of the energy they brought to the parade – they were electric!

The Young Leaders programme is a shining example of what we can achieve with the support of our donors, supporters and partners across the community.

Click [HERE](#) for a little clip from the day!

Proving our impact

Recent research highlights the profound impact of youth clubs on young people's wellbeing, social connections, and future prospects. These studies reinforce the urgent need for investment in safe, engaging spaces where young people can thrive.

Youth and their free time



95% OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ATTEND A YOUTH CLUB IN LONDON SAY IT'S MADE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO THEIR LIVES ESPECIALLY WITH 'MAKING FRIENDS AND SOCIAL INTERACTION'

OnSide's 2024 Generation Isolation report reveals that 76% of young people spend most of their free time on screens, with nearly half feeling lonely and anxious. Just 15% attend youth centres, despite their benefits.

Devastating cost of closures

93%

YOUNG PEOPLE REPORT IMPROVED SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND EXPERIENCE ENHANCED MENTAL HEALTH, RESILIENCE, AND SELF-CONFIDENCE WHEN ATTENDING YOUTH CLUBS LIKE UNITAS

The Institute of Fiscal Studies found austerity-driven closures led to lower academic performance (-4%) and increased youth crime (+14%). Every £1 cut resulted in a £3 societal loss.

Improving mental health

77%

IMPROVING OR MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH

81%

BOOSTING SELF-CONFIDENCE

These are the findings of an OnSide and King's College London study: 'Theory of Change'. Unitas welcomed 3,000+ members with 35,000 visits last year, operating 1,800+ hours - 50% more than schools. 80% report better physical health and 70% improved mental health in six months.

Cost-effectiveness and future work



£1 INVESTED INTO YOUTH ZONES CREATES A SOCIAL RETURN OF £13 IN THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Delivering increased social value enhancing young people's health and wellbeing. A major OnSide study with King's College London explores youth club impact on education and behaviour.

Slam dunk! A spotlight on Sports at Unitas

Sports are more than just games. They're a way to inspire, unite, and empower young people. This quarter, we've expanded our sports programmes. Here's a look at the highlights.

Community Partnerships



Growing strength and unity

The Barnet Bulldogs basketball team brings young people together, creating a sense of belonging and teamwork. Weekly sessions have become a highlight for participants, with a growing number of members joining the team.



Friday Night Football Success

In collaboration with QPR Football Club, Unitas hosted a vibrant Friday night football tournament on 1 December. This event saw fantastic participation, bringing together young people for an evening of skill, sportsmanship, and fun.



AST Volleyball

Every Wednesday, our Junior members have the chance to sharpen their volleyball skills with the talented team from AST Volleyball. These engaging sessions focus on teaching the fundamentals of the game, teamwork, and having fun.

Expanding our reach



Our school outreach initiative has grown, with Unitas delivering sessions in partnership with five local schools. Giacomo, our Sports Coordinator, attends Edgware Primary School once a week to deliver after-school boxing sessions to 10 young people. These sessions aim to inspire young people to stay active and discover the benefits of teamwork and physical fitness.

Female engagement



Our Female Engagement Committee continues to champion the participation of young women in sports. Rochelle Mills, our Female Engagement Coordinator, works in Saracens High School twice a week to deliver workshops for 20 girls in years 7, 8 and 9. They cover a range of topics including mental health, periods and yoga.

Looking ahead

More opportunities means more impact! With the recent successes of our sports programmes this quarter, we're excitedly working on new initiatives for the coming year, including expanded partnerships, more tournaments, and enhanced inclusive sports offerings – watch this (sports) space!

A shout out to our amazing volunteers

We are blown away by the impact of our volunteers across 2024! With no less than 42 volunteers at different points of the year and an all-time high in November of 31 volunteers, we are proud to celebrate their dedication and hard work. Together, they gifted 3,488 volunteer hours across 2024, the equivalent of £47,250!

In fact, based on a 2020 report – ‘Assessing the value of volunteers in community businesses’, the total value of volunteer contributions on average is between £212 million and £246 million a year. A key finding from the report indicates that the ability to recruit and retain volunteers stands out as a critical success factor across all community businesses – as does managing the volunteers in many of them.

Thought about making a real difference?

Volunteering at Unitas not only supports young people but gives you the chance to gain new skills, make connection, and be part of something truly rewarding! To get involved, email volunteering@unitasyouthzone.org or fill out the [application form](#).

Congratulations to our Volunteers of the Month from the quarter:



October: Alice Ho

Alice has made an incredible impact, from supporting Wednesday sessions in the Sports Hall to volunteering at our Forever Young Hub, part of our Warm Hub programme in partnership with Cadent and Age UK Barnet



November: Kara Davies

Kara is incredibly positive and dependable and fits so well into the team. She is a big part of why Wednesdays are such successful sessions and truly embodies the spirit of what makes Unitas so special



December 2024: Nicole Guimaraes

Nicole has been an amazing addition to the Saturday morning team. She is a positive force and approaches the young people with openness and curiosity. She is consistent in her contributions and a reliable resource to everyone

Outstanding Trustee Contribution Award

OnSide Annual Network Summit

We were thrilled to see Unitas Trustee Janaki Allen recognised with the ‘**Outstanding Trustee Contribution Award**’ at the 2024 OnSide Annual Network Summit.

Janaki has been a Trustee of Unitas for an incredible 5.5 years, joining just before our doors first opened. Her commitment, passion, and selflessness have been evident every step of the way, and her impact is felt across the entire OnSide organisation.

Janaki’s leadership as Chair of the Delivery Committee has been transformative. She has established a model that ensures openness and accountability, scrutinising Unitas’ programme to ensure young people receive the best possible offer.

Congratulations to Janaki, and thank you for your extraordinary service to Unitas Youth Zone. You have set a gold standard for Trusteeship and shown just how powerful the role of a Trustee can be in shaping opportunities for young people.



JANAKI ALLEN
Unitas Trustee

“Janaki’s dedication, passion, and tireless commitment to supporting Unitas’ young people at both operational and strategic levels are of the highest order.”

LONDON WITHOUT LIMITS Crowdfunder is BACK!

2-3 March 2025

As you know, we receive no additional government funding and 85% of the income we need to raise to keep Uritas going is achieved through voluntary donations. Without fundraising, we cannot continue to keep our doors open and support the 1,000+ young people who come through our doors each week.

That's why we are excited to announce this year's [London Without Limits](#) crowdfunder event, a citywide effort between OnSide's four London Youth Zones: Future in Barking and Dagenham; Legacy in Croydon; WEST in Hammersmith and Fulham and Uritas.

This campaign, which takes place on 2 and 3 March 2025, provides an exciting opportunity to raise the funds we need, and what's more, every pound raised will be doubled! Here is a [video](#) that highlights the amazing work we do and the urgent need for fundraising.

We're calling on the people who know us the best to become a Champion and help us reach our goals so we can continue to support young people in North London to reach their potential.

What will Champions do?

From 10am on 2 March to 6pm on 3 March, Champions send pre-prepared WhatsApp or text message to friends and family, asking them to make a small donation to support our work. It's really simple and fun, basically fundraising from your sofa on a Sunday morning! we provide all the support you need to reach and beat your goal.

Want to know how you can help? It's really simple!

Scan the QR code to sign up or click [HERE](#)



Get in touch with our fundraising team!

 07365 330 582

 Fundraising Team

Upcoming dates



Uritas ABC Boxing shows

Sunday 9 February and Sunday 11 May

2025 London Without Limits crowdfunder

2 and 3 March 2025

Sign up to be a CHAMPION

Uritas Career Fair

3 April 2025



Stay in touch!

Want to learn how you can make an impact in the lives of young people?

Email us at Fundraising@unitasyouthzone.org

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