

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday 11 September 2026

South Bank community built on social housing reaches National Diversity Awards final

South Bank organisation recognised for work bringing together people of different ages, backgrounds and identities across Lambeth and Southwark

Coin Street Youth and Community Programmes is preparing to represent London's South Bank at the National Diversity Awards 2026, after being selected as a national finalist for its work creating inclusive communities across Lambeth and Southwark.

The team has been shortlisted for the Community Organisation Award – Multi-Strand, with the winner to be announced at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral on Friday 18 September.

It is the first time Coin Street has reached the National Diversity Awards final. The nomination attracted more than 147 public votes and supporting testimonials, recognising the impact of the team's work and Coin Street's wider commitment to creating places where people can participate, contribute and belong.

That community-building has deep roots on the South Bank. Alongside transforming a previously neglected part of central London, Coin Street has provided cooperative social housing that has enabled local people and families to put down roots in an area increasingly characterised by major cultural institutions, tourism and high property values.

The housing provides an important foundation for Coin Street's wider community work: creating not simply somewhere for people to live, but a neighbourhood in which people of different ages, incomes, backgrounds and identities can meet, participate and build relationships.

The recognition celebrates the work of the whole Youth and Community Programmes team, which supports young people, families, older people, volunteers and residents through activities designed to build confidence, improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and strengthen community connections.

The Multi-Strand nomination also reflects Coin Street's wider equality and inclusion work, including the Black Lives Matter Race and Equality Steering Group, Wellbeing team and LGBTQ+

staff groups, alongside colleagues, volunteers, community members and partner organisations whose work helps make inclusion part of everyday life at Coin Street.

Supporters submitting testimonials repeatedly highlighted the breadth and inclusivity of that work. One said:

“The whole team are amazing... with a great mix of backgrounds and perspectives. What stands out is how naturally it all comes together, it’s not just diversity on paper.”

Other supporters described Coin Street as a place where people from diverse backgrounds can make friends, try new things and be themselves, and where people of different ages, cultures, religions, identities and needs are welcomed and valued.

There is also a remarkable connection between the community and one of the South Bank’s best-known cultural institutions. Tate Modern’s former Boiler House was renamed the **Natalie Bell Building** in 2018 as part of artist Tania Bruguera’s Hyundai Commission.

Natalie Bell, Coin Street’s Head of Youth and Community Programmes and a longstanding SE1 resident, was selected by Tate Neighbours, a group of people who live or work in SE1, in recognition of her positive contribution to the lives of others in the local community.

Natalie Bell, Head of Youth and Community Programmes at Coin Street, said:

“Being shortlisted for a National Diversity Award is a wonderful recognition of the whole Youth and Community Programmes team and of the communities we work alongside every day.

“Our programmes bring together people of different ages, backgrounds, identities and experiences, but inclusion at Coin Street goes much wider than any one team. Our Race and Equality work, LGBTQ+ staff groups, wellbeing activity, volunteers, colleagues and community partners all contribute to creating a place where people can feel welcomed, valued and able to belong.

“For me, this is also personal. I came to live at Redwood Housing Co-operative in 1995 when I was homeless and brought up my children here. Co-op living opened my eyes to what people can achieve collectively. Nearly thirty years later, I have the privilege of leading community programmes in the neighbourhood I call home.

“That’s why this recognition means so much. Coin Street’s social housing isn’t separate from our community work – it’s part of the foundation that allows people to put down roots, build relationships and feel that they belong.

“What makes this recognition particularly special is the support we received from the people who know our work. Their comments talk about friendship, confidence, care, opportunity and belonging. Whatever happens in Liverpool, reaching the national final is something the whole community can be proud of.”

Testimonials submitted in support of the nomination describe the Youth and Community Programmes team as creating welcoming spaces where people can “engage, connect, contribute and feel like they belong”.

They also give a vivid picture of the breadth of the work: young people gaining confidence and leadership opportunities; older residents finding friendship and reducing isolation; families accessing activities and support; people with disabilities participating in community life; and residents taking part in health, wellbeing, arts and creative programmes.

The National Diversity Awards shortlisting recognises organisations making an outstanding contribution to equality, diversity and inclusion. Coin Street is a finalist in the Community Organisation – Multi-Strand category.

Coin Street will be represented at the Awards by Natalie Bell and Communications & Media Manager Keith Winestein, who developed and submitted Coin Street’s successful nomination. Keith previously received the National Diversity Awards LGBT Role Model Award in 2021 for his work in HIV & AIDS and mental health.

The winner will be announced at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral on Friday 18 September 2026.

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Notes to editors

About Coin Street

Coin Street Community Builders is a social enterprise and development trust based on London’s South Bank, working across Lambeth and Southwark.

Coin Street grew from a community campaign to secure the future of a significant part of the South Bank for the people who live and work there. Its development of cooperative social housing and community facilities has helped sustain a mixed residential community in the heart of central London.

Its Youth and Community Programmes support young people, families, older adults, volunteers and local communities through activities spanning youth work, learning, wellbeing, social activity, volunteering, arts and community participation.

About Natalie Bell

Natalie Bell is Head of Youth and Community Programmes at Coin Street and a longstanding SE1 resident and community organiser.

After experiencing homelessness, Natalie moved into Coin Street’s Redwood Housing Co-operative at Oxo Tower Wharf in 1995, where she raised her children. She credits cooperative living with introducing her to the power of collective action and communities working together to address their own needs.

As a single parent, frustration at the lack of activities and services available to local families led Natalie to establish FamilyLinks with other local parents in 2001, initially as a volunteer. The initiative went on to provide services for hundreds of local families and young people.

Natalie became a trustee of Coin Street Community Builders and Coin Street Centre Trust in 2002. From 2003 to 2014 she was founder and director of SE1 United, a youth forum established by local young people, developing her work in community organising and youth leadership.

In 2016, Natalie became Coin Street's Head of Youth and Community Programmes, leading staff and volunteers delivering activities for families, young people, adults and older people across Waterloo and North Southwark.

In 2018, Tate Modern's former Boiler House was renamed the **Natalie Bell Building** as part of artist Tania Bruguera's Hyundai Commission. Natalie was selected by Tate Neighbours, a group of people who live or work in SE1, in recognition of her positive contribution to the lives of others in the local community.

Natalie has worked with Tate Neighbours to help create opportunities for local people to access Tate Modern's art, cultural experiences and spaces, including activities designed to engage people who might otherwise feel excluded.

Natalie has an MSc in Voluntary Sector Management from Bayes Business School and runs Unleashing Talent Ltd, a community-focused consultancy providing lecturing, training and action research for organisations working with marginalised communities.

About the nomination

Coin Street Youth and Community Programmes is shortlisted in the Community Organisation Award – Multi-Strand category at the National Diversity Awards 2026.

The nomination attracted more than 147 public votes and supporting testimonials.

Interviews and media

Natalie Bell, Head of Youth and Community Programmes, is available for interview.

Coin Street can also provide:

- community contributors;
- high-resolution photography;
- filming opportunities on the South Bank;
- case studies and supporting statistics;
- the 90-second *Imagine* film introducing Coin Street and its community.

Media contact

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