

Why Do We Have Restrictive Covenants in the Village?

The existing Restrictive Covenants were imposed in 1980 when Unilever started selling off the houses and in 1998 when Unilever transferred ownership and care of the Village to the Port Sunlight Village Trust. The restrictive covenants are tied to the property and granted through HM Land Registry. They are legal, binding agreements between the Trust and the individual owners of property in the Village. The covenant continues over the land or property even when the current owner sells it to another person.

The Port Sunlight village restrictive covenants establish the rights and responsibilities of property owners in the village. Like the statutory protection afforded to listed buildings and the planning controls in place for conservation areas, the over-arching goal of the restrictive covenants is to preserve the unique heritage architecture, landscape and harmonious residential character of the village.

What do the restrictive covenants cover?

- An annual rent charge (currently £1, payable to the Trust)
- A notification requirement and fee (currently £10, payable to the Trust) when the a property is sold or transferred
- Rights and privilege for the Trust or its contractors to access a property for necessary maintenance or utilities works on adjacent properties, roads, sewers or drains
- Responsibility of the owner(s) to keep the exterior of their home in good decorative repair and condition
- Responsibility of the owner(s) to keep the exterior and structure of their home, boundary walls and fences, and sewers and drains in good repair and condition
- Prohibition against alterations or construction of extensions or additions to the building
- Requirement to receive written consent from the Trust before erecting television aerials, satellite dishes or similar apparatus
- Restriction on the exterior paint colour and finish decorative treatments
- Limitations on the use of their home

What do the restrictive covenants mean from a heritage prospective?

- Property owners in Port Sunlight are legally required to:
- Keep their buildings, boundary walls and fences in good repair and condition.
- Use the Trust's paint and finish scheme to decorate the exterior of their homes.
- Receive written permission before they install radio or television aerials, satellite dishes or similar apparatus.
- Receive written permission before they alter, extend or build an addition to their property.

What if I breach the restrictive covenant?

Although the Trust prefers to work with owners and residents to address violations and breaches of the restrictive covenants, the Trust can take action through the Courts by obtaining an injunction or claiming damages for wilful neglect or work done in breach of the covenant.