

THE RESIDENTS' UPDATE

SUMMER 2026

PORT
SUNLIGHT
VILLAGE TRUST

OWNER-OCCUPIER RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

Do you ever wonder why you pay an annual £1 estate rent and where this originated from?

Since 1980, a binding agreement has existed between property owners and Port Sunlight Village Trust, initially via Unilever and then formally from 1999 when we took over the care of the village. The restrictive covenants aim to protect the village's unique heritage, architecture, and residential character, and remain in effect even when ownership changes.

The covenants require owners to:

- Pay £1 to PSVT annually in January
- Keep their buildings, boundary walls and fences in good repair and condition.
- Paint the exterior of their homes according to the approved paint and finish scheme.
- Receive written permission from us before installing aerials and satellite dishes.
- Receive written permission from us before alterations, extensions or other additions to property are made.
- Use their property purely as a dwelling house.

To confirm ownership details or to request further information regarding Restrictive Covenants, you can pop in to see us in our offices at above Port Sunlight Museum, 23 King George's Drive, or call us on 0151 644 4800.



RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT

Big changes are coming for private renting, with the first phase of the new Renters Reform Act coming into effect from 1 May 2026.

The new law is designed to give tenants more security and stronger protections. Some of the key changes include:

- Ending "no fault" Section 21 evictions
- Limiting rent increases to once a year
- Giving tenants more rights to request permission for pets
- Extra protections for families and people receiving benefits
- Moving all tenancies to rolling periodic agreements

Over the next few years, there will also be new standards and checks for private rented homes, including a landlord database and a new Ombudsman service for tenants.

We are already preparing for these changes and, if you are one of our assured tenants, you will have received a letter explaining the changes, along with a copy of the Government's Renters' Rights Act Information Sheet. If you have not already done so, please return the form confirming that you have received this information.

If you have any questions about how these changes may affect you, please contact us on 0151 644 4800, email us at admin@portsunlightvillage.com, or visit us.



FRONT GARDEN POLICY

Alongside this Residents' Update, you will find a copy of our revised Front Garden Policy. We wanted to share it with residents in a clear and convenient way, so everyone has the same information to hand.

The policy explains how residents can help care for their front gardens while protecting the special character of Port Sunlight. It outlines what kinds of planting and light maintenance are encouraged, what needs approval, and where to go for advice if you are unsure. We hope it gives a helpful overview and supports everyone in keeping the village looking its best.



HERITAGE AND PLANNING UPDATES

What Port Sunlight homeowners need to know

Recent changes to heritage and planning policies in Wirral are having a direct impact on Port Sunlight homeowners – affecting both what is expected when applying for permission to carry out work and how the council makes decisions. This year, we're sharing a series of articles explaining these changes and what they mean for residents.

Some developments have been positive. For example, Wirral Council's re-adoption of the Port Sunlight Listed Building Local Listed Building Consent Order (LLBCO) has streamlined consent for installation of secondary glazing, replacement yard gates, and rear doors and windows (where the existing are inappropriate or in very poor repair). However, other changes have added extra steps, time and cost for homeowners applying for Listed Building Consent or Planning Permission.

Wirral's new Local Plan was adopted in March 2025. This sets out policies for managing heritage assets such as listed buildings and conservation areas, protecting public green spaces, and guiding regeneration in areas outside the conservation area. General heritage policies are contained in Section WD2 of the Plan, while Port Sunlight-specific policies can be found under Policy WP4, CON-SA4.1, A

Following the Local Plan, Wirral Council introduced a new Local Validation Checklist in May 2025. This checklist sets out what information must be provided before an application can be considered "valid."

One significant change is that all applications now require existing and proposed drawings – including elevation drawings, floor and roof plans, and site plans. For many homeowners, this introduces extra cost and time, particularly for relatively straightforward applications that may not previously have required professional drawings.

Another important change is the replacement of the Heritage Statement with a Historic Environment Impact Assessment (HEIA). An HEIA is required for Listed Building Consent and planning applications that affect heritage assets, either directly or indirectly. While similar to a Heritage Statement, an HEIA can require more specialist knowledge to prepare. This sits alongside the continued requirement for a Design and Access Statement for Listed Building Consents and certain planning applications.

On the positive side, larger developments near the conservation area are now subject to stricter requirements. Proposals for tall buildings must include 3-dimensional visualisations and Townscape and Visual Impact Assessments, helping decision-makers – and residents – better understand how new developments might affect views and the character of Port Sunlight.

Another consideration regarding planning applications is the local authority's annual application fee increase which went into effect on 1 April 2026. While Listed Building Consent applications remain free (for the application itself), householder planning applications to enlarge, improve or alter a single house now cost £548. Planning applications to erect a structure, gate, fence, wall or other enclosure within the boundaries of an existing dwelling house cost £272.

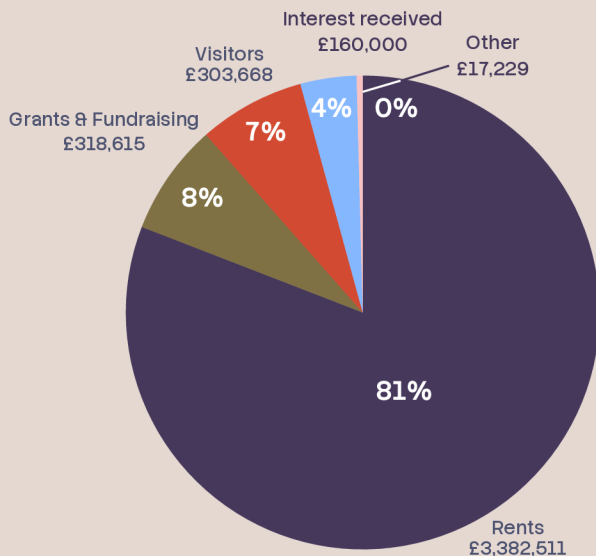
Port Sunlight Village Trust supports actions to protect heritage and recognises the clarity the new validation checklist provides. However we are concerned about the increased burden placed on homeowners, particularly the extra expense involved in commissioning drawings for modest works.

To help, registers of accredited conservation architects are available through the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). We also maintain a list of architects experienced with Port Sunlight properties. In addition, an online exhibition of original village drawings called Drawn Together, and the Trust's library and museum archive offer valuable resources for homeowners preparing applications.

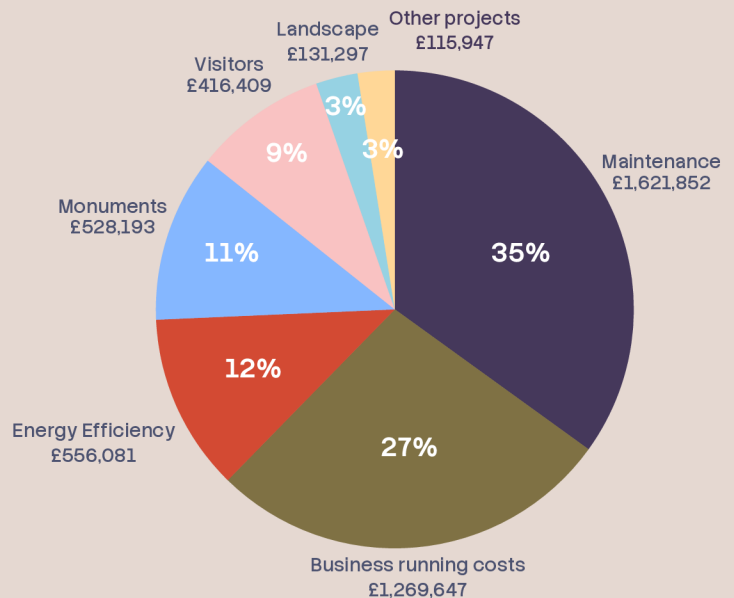
OUR FINANCES IN 2026-27

As a responsible and transparent charity, we want to give Port Sunlight's residents an insight into how we're funded and how we spend our income. As you can see from the charts below, we're expecting to receive £4,182,023 this year (mostly from rents), and spend £4,639,426. This shortfall has been carefully considered and managed, driven by strategic priorities such as improving the energy efficiency of our tenants' homes and the Boating Pond project (monuments).

OUR INCOME



OUR EXPENDITURE



MEET YOUR BLOCK CHAMPIONS

Say hello to Flo, Stephen, Sam, Glen, Liam, Steven and David who have developed the Block Champions scheme through the Heritage Homes Advisory Group.

Block Champions work alongside our Conservation and Maintenance Manager to support their neighbours with the upkeep of your homes.

Your Block Champion can signpost information and resources, share up-to-date contractor directories, support with communicating planning rules and policies, and more.

Email portsunlighthomes@outlook.com or call Port Sunlight Village Trust on 0151 644 4800 and we can connect you with your Block Champion.

