

# PORT SUNLIGHT GAZETTE

THE NEWSLETTER OF PORT SUNLIGHT VILLAGE TRUST



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- Updates from village groups and societies
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# New home plans – tell us your views

*PSVT is looking to develop the vacant site on the corner of Water Street and Wharf Street. The site has been empty for a long time and has become a bit of an eyesore, which we are keen to address. However, what we build has to be right for Port Sunlight and future generations. That is why we want to hear your views.*

## Building for the future

We are facing a climate crisis, and the way homes are built and how we live in them is a major contributor to carbon emissions. We believe the well-being of future generations of residents cannot be separated from the threat posed by climate change. Just as the original village is a model for design and place-making, so can any new homes also be exemplary.

There is an existing planning consent from 2010, but PSVT has reflected and, being aware of the impact that new homes can have on existing residents, wants to ensure that any development leaves a positive legacy for future generations. The homes should be respectful of both heritage and residents. High quality design is a priority.

## Get involved

You are invited to attend a consultation event where you can learn more about how homes impact on the environment and Port Sunlight's different styles and design features. We also want to hear from you:

- Tell us what matters to you most about the new homes
- Tell us what makes Port Sunlight special to you
- Share your views on different approaches to creating sustainable homes
- Help inform a revised approach to the site

## CONSERVATION CORNER

In this new feature we will be talking about some of the conservation issues that regularly crop up in the village. In this first edition, Lizzie Heywood, our Conservation and Maintenance Officer, discusses the humble and often overlooked yard gate...

You may not know it but your rear yard gate is an important feature of your property and like the rest of your home is protected by a Grade II listing. Most, but not all, Port Sunlight properties feature a yard gate; a solid timber door fitted within the brick boundary wall at the back of the house. If your home does have a yard gate, it should look like the images shown here. If it doesn't, it probably means that it doesn't comply with the Local Listed Building Consent Order (LLBCO) and should be either repaired or replaced.



Does your yard gate look like this?

If you are looking to replace your yard gate, you must apply for written consent to Wirral Council through the LLBCO before doing so - replacing without consent is actually a criminal offence and subject to enforcement action. However, help is at hand and you can find out about your yard gate and how to replace it through our Residents' Website - [www.portsunlightresidents.com](http://www.portsunlightresidents.com).

Alternatively, you can contact me; I offer an advisory service for all residents on the care and management of their listed homes, not just their yard gates. So, if you have any questions or concerns about the care, conservation and maintenance of your property, please get in touch - [admin@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:admin@portsunlightvillage.com) or 0151 644 4800.

## Leavers and joiners

First, it's a big 'hello' to two new members of staff. Lis Robinson is PSVT's new Customer Service Administrator, having joined us in May. Lis is based in the Operations Directorate and is probably the person you speak to if you call the PSVT office. She will be providing administrative support to the team.

In November 2020 we also welcomed PSVT's Business Support Officer for Conservation and Maintenance, Jen Head. Also based in the Operations Directorate, Jen provides administrative support to the team, focusing particularly on heritage conservation and property maintenance.

You may remember from the last edition of The Gazette that we were looking to recruit a new Heritage Manager. Well, we are in the process of appointing and hope to introduce our new staff member very soon.

Finally, it is 'goodbye' to two valued members of staff - Cleaner, Sandra Noonan, and Visitor Services Assistant, Cherisse Foster. Thanks to them both for their hard work and dedication.



Recent recruit, Jen Head

There are three options. You can either attend an in-person, drop-in session on Monday 19th July at 2-7pm at Hulme Hall, or a virtual session via Zoom on Monday 26th July at 1-2pm.

You will need to book your place for both events in advance here:  
[portsunlightnewhomes.eventbrite.com](https://portsunlightnewhomes.eventbrite.com)

If you are experiencing problems with the booking platform please call 0151 644 4800.

If you cannot attend either event, we have a 2-3-minute online survey you can complete. It will be available 19th - 30th July. Either:

- Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PortSunlightNewHomes>

or

- Point your smart phone camera at this QR code to access the survey on your phone



## An update from Paul Harris, Chief Executive of Port Sunlight Village Trust

I am very pleased to report that things seem to be edging back to normal in Port Sunlight. Both the Museum and the Edwardian Worker's Cottage have now reopened after 14 months, and the brand new SoapWorks exhibition in The Lyceum has launched. We have had some lovely feedback already and some nice local and national press coverage. If you've not visited yet then our Resident Free Entry Days (10am-1pm on Saturdays 17th July and 21st August) mean you have no excuse. Simply turn up with proof of address.

However, we are not yet completely open – please remember that the PSVT offices are closed to visitors and that our telephones are not staffed over the lunch period.

Other good reopening news comes in the form of the new *Being Port Sunlight* exhibition and the Tod Hanson contemporary art installation, *Box Room*, both at the Church Hall. The exhibitions will be open until the end of September after which we plan to use the space for school visits and community activities. A huge 'thank you' goes to the church for allowing us to co-use the space with them for the coming year.

Looking to the future, the PSVT Board has recently adopted its first environmental sustainability strategy. This is an important step for both PSVT and the village as a whole. More details will follow in the next edition.

The built environment is a key part of that strategy and an important part of the thinking around our plans for a new housing development on Wharf/Water Street. Working with Paddock Johnson Partnerships, our emphasis is on both good quality design and environmental sustainability. There's more on this opposite, including details of residents' consultation events on 19th & 26th July. Please come along and have your say.

If you are out and about in the village at the moment you might notice staff from Donald Inshall Associates who are surveying all PSVT's monuments and memorials. They are working to help us develop new restoration and maintenance programmes for all the village's treasures. This follows last year's survey work on the Boating Pond and Leverhulme Memorial. On the subject of the pond, we'd be grateful if you could please keep out of it to avoid damage both to the monument and yourself!

As outlined in the last edition of *The Gazette*, we have recently commissioned EMBED and the Disability Collaborative Network to undertake an organisational review of all aspects of our business to ensure we are as inclusive as possible. Their recommendations are expected in July, and again we'll provide more detail in the next edition.

The village is looking fantastic at the moment – thanks to our landscape staff for their wonderful work – and as lockdown lifts there's no better time to be outside. (Incidentally, we've welcomed some great location filming recently including the Nolan Sisters filming for their cruise series!) In this edition of *The Gazette* you'll read about a whole summer-full of outdoors events and activities – get out and enjoy them!

*Paul Harris, Chief Executive, Port Sunlight Village Trust.*



Or like this?



Welcome, Lis Robinson



**To book a place on any of these activities (except volunteering) call Claire on 07592 035 923, Monday Friday 9am-5pm.**

**You can also keep up to date with what's on via the Residents' website - [www.portsunlightresidents.com](http://www.portsunlightresidents.com)**

## HAVE SOME TIME ON YOUR HANDS? WHY NOT VOLUNTEER?

2021 is an exciting year for PSVT with many new projects coming online and favourites like the Museum and Edwardian Worker's Cottage reopening. It seems a good time to restart PSVT's volunteer recruitment campaign.

Volunteers are essential to the smooth running of PSVT. They fulfil many important roles including: leading guided tours of the village, researching our museum collections, helping maintain our parks and gardens, stewarding our museums and historic buildings, supporting our social groups and elderly residents, and so much more.

Why not join our committed and merry band of volunteers? We are currently advertising for several roles covering the Museum and Edwardian Worker's Cottage, SoapWorks, the *Being Port Sunlight* exhibition and the *Box Room* art installation.

If you are interested just drop an email to [volunteering@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:volunteering@portsunlightvillage.com) or ring our reception on 0151 644 4800. We would love to hear from you. And if you are still not sure if volunteering is for you read what new volunteer, Paula Jarvis, has to say about her volunteering experience...

### Tell us a little bit about yourself, Paula

I live in Bebington with my husband and teenage daughter. I retired a few years ago from my job at Unilever Research where I worked with consumers, developing laundry products.

### What do you love about the Port Sunlight?

Port Sunlight has a very tranquil feel about it. I enjoy exercising in the village and visiting with family, admiring the incredible architecture and green open spaces.

### In which part of PSVT do you volunteer?

I volunteer in SoapWorks which opened in May this year.

### Why did you start volunteering?

I chose to volunteer at Port Sunlight Village Trust because of my connection with the village, having lived here when I was young and worked for Unilever. The village holds a special place in my heart, and after retiring I had time on my hands to pursue my interests and give back to my local community. I particularly enjoy sharing my knowledge with visitors, especially in SoapWorks as it relates to my former career.

### What would you say to anyone thinking of volunteering with PSVT?

Go for it! I am thoroughly enjoying the experience and being able to take part in various associated activities, whilst meeting like-minded people. It feels really good to be part of this new Port Sunlight visitor attraction and I would highly recommend it. If you're interested in the village and see volunteer opportunities being advertised, get in touch as there is always a friendly member of staff interested in hearing from you.



## Social walk and light exercise group

*Walking, workouts and a lot of laughs*

You may have seen our hugely popular Social Walk and Light Exercise group around the village. We launched the group in April and since then it has gone from strength to strength, so much so that we have extended the initial 12-week programme for a further 12 weeks, taking us right through into September. Why not join us?

Local instructor Natalie Johnson leads the classes which are designed for all ages and abilities, and both men and women. Walking is a great full body workout, and being easy

on the joints can be enjoyed by anyone who wants a low-impact exercise to improve their cardiovascular fitness/stamina. Each week Natalie also incorporates some light exercises such as stretching and toning using light resistance bands. But most of all, these sessions are intended to bring people together to make friends and enjoy one another's company.

The group meets at 11:30am each Wednesday morning in The Dell, with each session lasting no longer than an hour. And it's free to take part! Call Claire to book a place.

## Children's yoga sessions in The Dell

Yoga is hugely beneficial to children's wellbeing. It helps improve balance, concentration, sleep and general health, and is even taught in primary schools across the country. Over the summer months Becky and Hannah from Moonbeam Yoga Wirral will be leading a series of outdoor classes in the beautiful setting of The Dell. The classes are designed for children aged 5-11 years old and will be held at 10.30am every Thursday from 22nd July through to 26th August.

It's free to take part and yoga mats will be provided. However, there are just 15 places available so booking is essential. To reserve a place call Claire.

Please note that parents or guardians must remain with their children for the duration of the session.



## Gardening-themed workshops

*Feeling green fingered but don't know where to start?*

Then join one of our free gardening-themed workshops led by Anna Kennedy, outdoors on our Community Allotment here in Port Sunlight. All materials are provided.

There are just five places available for each workshop so booking is essential. Here's some dates for your diary:

- Make your own herb trough - Thursday 15th July, 7-8pm
- Make your own ceramic plant pot and plant labels - Thursday 22nd July, 7-8pm
- Paint your own ladybird feeder - Saturday 7th August, 10-11am
- Make your own flowerpot men- Monday 16th August, 7-8pm
- Make your own paper flowers- Saturday 28th August, 10-11am

Call Claire to reserve a spot

Bring out your inner Monty Don with Anna

# Summer in the village!

There are lots of events and activities taking place in Port Sunlight this summer, from classic cars to outdoor theatre. PSVT will also be running a series of events focusing on the vast range of wildlife that calls Port Sunlight home, and will be introducing you to lots of fun ways to learn about our animal neighbours.

Keep an eye on our website for further updates.

## Theatre in The Dell

Let Folksy Theatre introduce you to the delights of open-air theatre this summer with two great shows in the evocative atmosphere of The Dell.

On Saturday 7th August at 7pm, Shakespeare's classic play, *The Tempest*, will transport you to Prospero's island and a tale of magic, betrayal, revenge and family. Then on Friday 20th August at 2pm, enjoy a brilliant family performance of *Little Red and the Big Bad Wolf*.

Tickets are available from Folksy's website:

<http://www.folksytheatre.co.uk/>

The show must go on, whatever the weather, so come prepared, and don't forget your picnic, rugs and folding chairs.



## Classic Car Show

If you're a bit of a petrol head, or have a penchant for elegant bodywork, then you'll be pleased to hear that Sunday 12th September will see the return of classic cars and motorbikes to Port Sunlight.

The Tame Valley Vintage & Classic Car Club promises a must-attend event for discerning classic car owners, collectors, experts and enthusiasts, as well as a great family day out.

Join them at 10am-4pm on the Museum Green where the vehicles will be displayed and their very knowledgeable owners will be on hand to answer your questions.



## Being Port Sunlight exhibition

In the exhibition residents talk about their experience of lockdown in Port Sunlight

While you are in the Church Hall visiting *Box Room* it would be a great idea to also check out the *Being Port Sunlight* exhibition. The exhibition chronicles the personal experiences of Port Sunlight's residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is full of personal reminiscences and images relating to lockdown, from groups, families and individuals. It makes for an emotional and fascinating display. The exhibition is free to enter.

The content for the exhibition has been drawn from *Be Port Sunlight*, an online hub containing a fascinating archive of audio-visual material which conveys a sense of life during the 2020 pandemic. Featuring everything from homemade NHS 'thank you' signs and pandemic poetry to virtual pubs and a lockdown love bench, it provides a snapshot of the intimate and shared moments which occurred in one historic village and conservation area during this time.

You can still contribute to this archive – visit the site to learn how: [www.beportsunlight.co](http://www.beportsunlight.co)



The National Lottery Heritage Fund

Historic England



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

## BOX ROOM

In a recent edition of The Gazette we told you about the Meeting Point programme – a project to partner six museums in the North of England with artists who will create new pieces of work in response to the museums and their collections.

We're pleased to announce that *Box Room*, a new installation by Tod Hanson for PSVT, will open on 17th July at the Church Hall, and will be open to visitors until 19th September.

This new, large-scale art installation is inspired by the iconic Sunlight soap; the world's first packaged and branded laundry soap. The outside of the 18-foot-long box installation uses graphic elements from the Sunlight packaging, while inside is a room which fuses the functional design of a factory space with a decorative domestic interior. Tod said of his design:

*"When it was first produced, more than 100 years ago, the red, yellow and blue of Sunlight's packaging was loud and modern, crashing into people's homes, shops and high streets. It still has that visual power today, I wanted to play with an iconic graphic and make it reveal something of the factory village behind it."*

Admission to *Box Room* is free.

Meeting Point is funded by Arts Council England through Arts & Heritage's National Portfolio Organisation funding.

Arts & Heritage



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**

**Meeting Point**  
Arts & Heritage working with museums



## FREE METAL EMBOSSED WORKSHOP

If you've enjoyed visiting *Box Room* and love crafts then you'll want to reserve your place on our embossing workshop. Using metal foil you'll create your own designs inspired by Tod Hanson's use of silver, copper, gold and bold shapes, as well as village architecture.

The workshop is at 2-3:30pm on Monday 26th July in the Church Hall.

Book your place by calling 07592 035 923.

We'll be announcing other *Box Room* related events soon – watch the PSVT website for details.



**Sheila Lucas**

In the first lockdown in 2020, Sheila Lucas, then 60, was a community volunteer at the Church Hall. She decided to make a mask out of old fabric scraps. The idea of making a mask out of old fabric scraps was born. She had a lot of fabric scraps from her sewing projects. She decided to make a mask out of old fabric scraps. She had a lot of fabric scraps from her sewing projects. She decided to make a mask out of old fabric scraps. She had a lot of fabric scraps from her sewing projects.

*"I enjoyed making the cast. I made his mask out of material with cats on, an exact copy of the mask I have myself."*

**Judith Bond**

At home she always played a large part in the community. She was a volunteer at the Church Hall. She decided to make a mask out of old fabric scraps. She had a lot of fabric scraps from her sewing projects. She decided to make a mask out of old fabric scraps. She had a lot of fabric scraps from her sewing projects.

**Steve Owen**

During lockdown, Steve Owen and his long time friends decided that instead of not seeing each other at all, they would meet up virtually on a Friday night. Being born to work in the metal industry, Steve Owen decided to create a series of cards. He had a lot of metal scraps from his work. He decided to make a series of cards. He had a lot of metal scraps from his work.

## The Gladstone Theatre

*After 15 months of pandemic-enforced closure, The Gladstone Theatre is preparing to reopen with a host of wonderful shows. And they can't wait!*



The team at The Gladstone Theatre said:

*"We honestly have the best supporters out there and we can't thank you all enough for your support over the course of this pandemic! Your donations, kind words, sharing your memories of your time both on and off our stage with us, and showing us why you love The Gladstone Theatre as much as we do, has been truly heart-warming."*

So, what can you expect over the remainder of the year? They have everything from plays and comedy, to children and family entertainment, plus live music. Shows include:

- **A Midsummer Night's Dream** Sunday 25th July, 7:00pm
- **Goldilocks And The Three Bears** Friday 6th August, 2:30pm
- **Forbidden Nights** Friday 20th August, 7:30pm
- **Holding A Candle To The World** Friday 3rd September, 2:30pm
- **Funhouse Comedy Club** Friday 24th September, 7:30pm
- **Lipstick On Your Collar** Saturday 2nd October, 7:30pm
- **Women in Rock** Friday 8th October, 7:30pm
- **Harry Panto** Wednesday 27th October, 2:30pm
- **Crissy Rock** Thursday 4th November, 7:30pm
- **The Christmas Pantomime** Jack and the Beanstalk

Tickets are available from The Gladstone Theatre website: [www.gladstonetheatre.org.uk](http://www.gladstonetheatre.org.uk)

The last 15 months have been the most difficult and challenging time the theatre staff have faced and donations for the theatre are still being accepted via [www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-the-gladstone](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/save-the-gladstone)

Follow the theatre on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for the latest information.

NB Reopening is dependent on the current Covid-19 situation and the government's reopening ruling.



**Were you  
a Port  
Sunlight  
Player?**

They may not look it but the Port Sunlight Players are 100 years old in 2022!

To mark the occasion, Julia Whitehead is producing a Centenary Show at The Gladstone Theatre in March next year. It will feature numbers and scenes from some of the group's most loved shows since 1922, and they want members past, present and (hopefully) future to help them celebrate.

Did you ever tread the boards with Port Sunlight Players in pantomimes, musicals or plays? Would you like to give amateur dramatics a go? Is behind-the-scenes more your thing? If so, get in touch. Weekly rehearsals begin in September.

For more information, and to let the group know you would like to get involved, visit their website: <https://portsunlightplayers.co.uk/>

## Ladies Bowling Team

Like many other societies in the village, the Ladies Bowling Team is getting back to a bit of normality at last. This long-lived club has actually been back playing since April – albeit at distance and in small groups – and although they are not playing league games this year the team is now playing home and away friendly matches with other clubs in the Birkenhead and Wirral League. It's been great to see familiar faces again.

If you're interested in trying your hand at bowls, taking a bit of exercise and making new friends then get in touch with Ann Clemett on 0151 327 2121. The club supports two teams who play on the green just off Bolton Road. Club days are Wednesday and Sunday at 1.30pm. Come and join us!



**Joining Sunday Worship from Home**

We continue to offer our Sunday Worship on Zoom. You can either join Zoom with video on a PC, Tablet or Smart Phone, or you can phone in on a landline of mobile phone and simply listen to the service.

**The stream will open at approximately 15 minutes before the start of each service**, if you arrive early, you will be placed in a waiting room and then admitted when everything is ready.

**Joining with video on a PC, Tablet or Smart Phone:**

**Option 1**

- click on the following zoom link: **Christ Church Sunday Worship Zoom**
- Please select 'Speaker View'.

**Option 2**

- open the Zoom website or app and enter the Meeting ID and Password:  
**Meeting ID:** 984 9741 4236  
**Meeting Password:** 674153
- Please select 'Speaker View'.



**Joining with audio on a landline or mobile phone:**

- Choose and dial any one of the phone numbers listed below (if the phone number you choose is engaged try another phone number).

<b>Dial-in numbers:</b>	0203 481 5237	0208 080 6592
	0203 481 5240	0131 460 1196
	0203 901 7895	0330 088 5830
	0208 080 6591	

- Key in the **Meeting ID: 984 9741 4236**, followed by '#'
- When asked for Participant ID press '#'
- Key in the **Meeting Password: 674153**, followed by '#'

**Stay and Chat:**

- Following the service there will be an opportunity to stay on Zoom and chat with others. You will be invited to unmute.

**Christ Church Website Address**

For more information about Christ Church visit [www.ccpsurc.info](http://www.ccpsurc.info)

**Christ Church opens up!**

While Christ Church is already open to worshippers, it is hoped that this beautiful church will be able to open to visitors for a period over the summer. An update will be posted on the noticeboard next to the lychgate and on the church's website.

<https://christchurchportsunlight.wordpress.com/>

If you are attending for a service please note that Sunday services are slightly shorter than usual - 30 minutes - which adheres to government and United Reformed Church guidelines. The services include music (but not the singing of hymns), responsive prayers, a Bible reading and reflection. Also, for the time being there will be one service each Sunday - at 10:30am - except on the second Sunday of the month when the service will take place at 3pm.

If you cannot attend in person then the livestream of the service is available, not just for those with an internet connection but to anyone with an ordinary telephone. Details of how to join the livestream are shown here and are in the Weekly Bulletin in the blog section of the church website: <https://christchurchportsunlight.wordpress.com/blog/>

As well as being available via their website, these Weekly Bulletins are distributed to the congregation by post, email and Facebook. They contain full details of the Covid-19 measures in place for worship in the church building. However, the church understands that many of you are not comfortable with larger gatherings or will continue to shield for health reasons, and so even when the church fully reopens Sunday services will still be available on Zoom.



**Hulme Hall**

Now that lockdown is lifting, the Hulme Hall fairs are back! The Craft and Gift Fairs open at 10am while the Antiques & Collectors Fairs and Flea Markets kick-off at 9:30am. There's also a Grand Christmas Fair on Sunday 28th November.

If you're interested in taking a table, or simply want further information, contact the Hall on 0151 644 8797 or at [enquiries@hulmehall.com](mailto:enquiries@hulmehall.com)

	<b>Antique &amp; Collectors Fair</b>	<b>Flea Market</b>	<b>Craft &amp; Gift Fair</b>
July	Sunday 18th	Sunday 4th	-
August	Sunday 29th	Sunday 1st	Monday 30th
September	Sunday 19th	Sunday 5th	Sunday 26th
October	Sunday 17th	Sunday 3rd	Sunday 24th
November	-	Sunday 7th	-

**Messy Church Activities from Christ Church**

Are you looking for activities with an element of faith and spirituality for your children? If so, get in touch with the Christ Church Messy Church Team. They hold a monthly 'Zoom' Messy Church Session for families. The team is taking a well earned rest over the summer but will return with Messy Church on Saturday 4th September at 10am.

Before the session the team sends out faith-based activity sheets. The sessions include songs, stories, a gallery of the children's crafts and blowing out the birthday candles.

To receive the activity sheet and details of the Zoom Messy Church Session, email Liz at [bulletin@ccpsurc.info](mailto:bulletin@ccpsurc.info) with your details and your child's name. The activity sheets are also available in the blog section of the church website - [www.ccpsurc.info](http://www.ccpsurc.info) - and in the Weekly Bulletin section of their Facebook page.

## Bloomin' marvellous!

*In a new feature for The Gazette, Liam English from PSVT's landscaping team introduces the beautiful blooms to be spotted in the village at the moment.*

The walk from the Lady Lever Art Gallery to the War Memorial is one that many of you reading this article will take daily. The long paths and wide views from monument to monument are intended to inspire and lift your spirits. They form the centre of Lord Leverhulme's evolving vision for Port Sunlight and are a staggering display of his company's wealth and will to impress. You are unlikely to see many urban views as grand, other than in some of the world's finest capital cities. The classical structures and the stately tilia trees are extraordinary, yet in these mid-summer months there is something just as beautiful, but much more temporal, a bit closer to your senses.

As you read this, if you were to wander through the Bandstand in the centre of the Diamond, our seasonal bedding should be out to full effect. Expertly planted by our gardening team in June, designed and lovingly tended by Vicky Smith, the show of dahlias, begonias, echinacea, salvia and ageratum is unlikely to be subtle! But there is a time and place for sophistication and understatement, and in our opinion mid-summer is not it. It may be a bit old fashioned and difficult to maintain, but the riot of colour created by bedding plants has been a Port Sunlight tradition as important as any other since the mid-1950s, and something that you can see sprinkled in every corner of our village.

We have been enjoying a fabulous year in our rose gardens, with those new roses that were planted just as we headed into the first Covid-19 lockdown filling out the borders with colour and scent. Rosa "Olivia Rose Austin" and our namesake Rosa "Port Sunlight" have been on particularly good form. The sheer number of blooms is certainly keeping our rose gardener, Nicky Evans, particularly busy this year, although she is also devising plans to find homes for all sorts of more unusual and unfamiliar rose species over the next few years.

I know you will all agree that the gardening team has done an amazing job, working tirelessly in incredibly difficult conditions. With significantly fewer gardeners working due to Covid-19 shielding, and working through the stresses of the pandemic, it is amazing that the standards have remained as high as they have. There are some jobs that have fallen behind our normal schedule, and the weeds have certainly been enjoying this warm weather, but Pete's hard work improving The Dell with new rhododendrons and heathers, Dave, Chris and Neil's efforts in keeping the village lawns and bowling greens mown, and Gary and Steve working as a pair on the mammoth task of keeping the shrub borders and hedges outside your homes tidy, have ensured that our village remains one of the prettiest and best kept you are likely to see.

If you do see the gardeners out and about, they always welcome a bit of appreciation, but if you do have any concerns or questions please do get in touch with the PSVT Office on 0151 644 4800, or send me an email at [l.english@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:l.english@portsunlightvillage.com).

Now, go enjoy the summer flowers, the leaves will be falling before you know it!





## The Old Millstone in The Dell

*In another new feature for The Gazette – a focus on local history - James Hayes, PSVT's Collections Officer, explores a little known but very interesting part of the village; the old millstone.*

*The millstone features in the work being undertaken by Donald Insall Associates as part of the village-wide survey of monuments and landscape outlined in Paul's introduction on page 3.*

Below the bridge at the lower end of The Dell - one of the village's most picturesque areas - sits a substantial material reminder of one of the industries that existed in the nearby area before the arrival of Lever Brothers Soap Works. Measuring more than 1.5 metres in diameter and weighing more than 450 kg, the circular stone has been in The Dell for almost 100 years, but before being superannuated as a decorative landscape feature, it enjoyed a career grinding flour at one of the Wirral's oldest flour mills, Bromborough Mill.

Until about 150 years ago, most villages in Britain had their own flour mill. This situation had arisen as a matter of necessity because communities had to rely on locally-grown and milled grain to provide the flour they needed to make their bread. This only began to change in the 19th century when the great wheat-growing areas of North America were opened up and the means to transport grain and flour in bulk over long distances was developed. In its time Wirral too was generously endowed with flour mills, but by the early 1900s there were only four left working. In an area short of rivers and streams, most of the Wirral's flour mills were windmills, but the mill at Bromborough was powered by water for much of its history.

Located close to Spital Road Bridge in the Dibbin Valley, Bromborough Watermill was considered to be the oldest mill site on the Wirral. The later mill is believed to have stood on the site of another which is mentioned in the Domesday Book; the huge survey of land and landholding commissioned by William the Conqueror in 1085. In the 12th century the Earl of Chester gave the Manor of Bromborough to the Abbey of St. Werburgh's, Chester. The monks built a new watermill on the land, building a dam to divert water from the River Dibbin to provide power. The watermill and the rest of the Manor of Bromborough remained in the possession of the abbey until the closure of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. After passing through various families, the Manor of Bromborough fell

under the control of the Mainwaring Family in the 18th century. In 1905 William Lever purchased the mill from SK Mainwaring. The tenant of the mill at this time was Frederick Ellis whose family had first taken possession as tenants back in 1777. The Ellises continued operating the mill until 1940 when milling ceased there and the family became retail traders. The mill building itself was demolished shortly afterwards in 1949, and today the site is the Daisy and Jake Day Nursery.

The Bromborough Mill was built of red sandstone which is believed to have come from a nearby quarry in Spital. Its millwheel was undershot, which meant that water ran beneath to push the wheel around. The shaft of the waterwheel passed into the cellar of the mill where a series of corks and gears worked the millstones on the ground floor above. In 1777 a windmill was built on some high ground overlooking the mill pond, but it was blown up with gunpowder in 1878 after it came to be regarded as unsafe. From 1835 onwards the mill was able to avail of steam power following the installation of a steam engine. This was particularly useful in dry weather when there was an insufficient head of water to turn the waterwheel. Later the construction of a railway embankment across the site in 1910 blocked the mill race and forced the waterwheel out of action. From then on the mill was worked by an oil engine.

When William Lever purchased the mill, The Dell millstone was not in actual use and had been lying idle for a number of years after being replaced by a different type of millstone, a French burr stone. In 1923 the redundant millstone was brought from the mill at Bromborough to The Dell in a horse and cart by Mr Alfred Perry, who lived at 33 Greendale Road. In 1954, as part of an extensive landscape improvement scheme for The Dell, the millstone was mounted on a shallow wall by Mr Richard Fairclough, a stonemason in the Estate Department, to serve as a garden seat. Three other millstones that came from an old windmill that stood above the watermill at Bromborough once lay on the site of the home of Mr Geoffrey Nairn, Chairman of Lever Brothers 1947-54 at Mill Road, Bromborough. These were later sent to Thornton Manor, Bromborough Hall and 'The Marfords', a large house that once stood on Dibbinsdale Road. However, the millstone in The Dell has remained relatively undisturbed all these years, a silent witness to passing time.



## A MESSAGE FROM FAMILY HOUSING

Family Housing Association hopes that both our tenants and the rest of the Port Sunlight village community are keeping safe and well. Family Housing Association has continued to operate during the difficult past 15 months, providing housing services to our tenants, including delivering the Planned Maintenance Programme here in Port Sunlight. We have appreciated the patience and good wishes received from our tenants. As restrictions are lifted, and we return to some form of normality, we are looking forward to working with our partners, including Port Sunlight Village Trust, to continue delivering better homes and communities.

## EMPLOYEE PURCHASE FACILITY

In the heart of Port Sunlight village there's what's been described as a hidden gem; the rather oddly named Employee Purchase Facility. The EPF is actually the former factory outlet shop for Unilever, and despite its name is both open to the public and sells other brands. There you will find everything from cleaning products to food, all at discounted prices. Those in the know say it's a great place for a bargain, and with lovely staff to boot.

You'll find the EPF in The Stable Yard (behind The Gladstone Theatre).

Opening times are Monday-Wednesday 10am-4pm, Thursday 10am-5.30pm and Friday 10am- 3pm.



## PORT SUNLIGHT LOTTERY

Port Sunlight Lottery celebrated its birthday in June 2021! It was launched a year ago to help raise much-needed funds for PSVT and since then we've had numerous winners in the village. Have you been one of them? Some of our members have been telling us what they've spent their winnings on, and they include holidays, meet-ups with family, buying new post-lockdown clothes and finally doing those DIY jobs they've been putting off for ages.

Are you playing yet? If not, visit <https://giantcashbonanza.online/portsunlight/> For just £2 per week you could be in with the chance of winning £1,000!

You can play up to six lines each week and can pay monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly.

You must be 16 years of age or older to take part.



*Have you got a story for a forthcoming issue of the Port Sunlight Gazette? Contact the PSVT office by phone 0151 644 4800 or email [feedback@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:feedback@portsunlightvillage.com)*

### Port Sunlight Village Trust

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Port Sunlight Village Trust is a registered charity (no. 1074713) and a registered company in England and Wales (no. 3719976)

## TWO GREAT COMPETITIONS TO ENTER!

The village institution that is the annual Port Sunlight Garden Competition returns this summer. The competition recognises the wonderful gardens and floral displays that our dedicated and proud residents nurture each year. It's especially encouraging to see that over the last 12 months a new wave of keen gardeners has emerged to go head-to-head with our more experienced competitors.

All properties in the Port Sunlight community are automatically entered, no matter the size of the garden or floral display, with this year's judging taking place on **26th July - 6th August**. There are winners and runners-up in each category which are:

- Best hanging basket
- Best front border or container
- Best allotment
- Best community garden
- Best overall display

Winners will be contacted in the last week of August and we'll be sharing the winners and runners-up in our next issue of The Gazette.



### The Flowerpot Character Competition

This summer also sees the welcome return of our Flowerpot Character Competition. The standard of entries last year was excellent and we hope to see lots more fun creations this year.

Again, all properties are automatically entered - just make sure that your character is outside your house from **12pm on Saturday 28th August**. Judging will start on New Chester Road, with prizes announced the following week.

It would be great to leave your flowerpot creations outside for all to enjoy during the bank holiday weekend. Who knows, it may end up in our village archive collection.

For information email [c.bates@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:c.bates@portsunlightvillage.com)



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