



## **Tender Brief**

### **A new website for Port Sunlight Village Trust**

#### **Introduction**

Port Sunlight Village Trust (PSVT) is looking to commission a partner to design, build and maintain a new website to help us engage with Port Sunlight's community; encourage visits to the village, our attractions and events; and share the important work we do – all to achieve our aim of making Port Sunlight an inspiring place to live, work and visit.

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#### **About Port Sunlight**

Port Sunlight was founded in 1888 by the industrialist William Lever. He wanted to provide the employees of his new Lever Brothers soap works and their families with decent and affordable housing and a wide range of facilities, services, policies, and incentives to ensure their well-being and 'betterment'.

Port Sunlight is not the first example of an industrial worker village, but it is one of the finest surviving examples in the world. It was an immediate precursor to and a model for the Garden City movement and influenced the design of planned worker settlements, garden villages and garden suburbs around the world from the turn of the twentieth century to the present day.

Most residential properties, public buildings and monuments are listed at Grade II. A number of the village's landscapes are also Grade II listed and included in Historic England's register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, including The Dell and The Diamond. The village, set in 130 acres of parkland and gardens, is protected by conservation area status and covenants.

Today the village is home to just over 2,000 residents, a mixture of owner-occupiers and private tenants, and under normal circumstances attracts in the region of 300,000 domestic and international visitors each year. There are a variety of community organisations and businesses operating in Port Sunlight, from the village school to two pubs, a hotel, conferencing and events space, a garden centre, and a theatre.

There are other important stakeholders in the village too, namely:

- Wirral Council provide certain statutory services including for planning, waste management and highways and transport.
- National Museums Liverpool is responsible for the Lady Lever Art Gallery, which was founded by William Lever and continues to house one of the UK's finest collections of fine and decorative art, usually attracting in the region of 200,000 visitors each year.
- Port Sunlight is the historic home of Unilever in the UK; Lever Brothers became Unilever in 1929 following a merger with the Margarine Union. The company's rich history is documented in extensive and nationally Designated archives held on site in the Unilever campus.

## About Port Sunlight Village Trust (PSVT)

PSVT is an independent charity founded in 1999 by Unilever Plc. Our vision is to make “Port Sunlight, an inspiring place to live, work and visit.” Our mission: “We are guardians of a unique and beautiful village, working with its community to ensure a great quality of life for residents and to celebrate William Lever’s amazing legacy through cultural and learning experiences for all.”

PSVT is responsible for:

- A diverse group of monuments (listed and unlisted), the museum collection, and the village archive.
- The landscape within the Conservation Area (except individual back gardens of houses).
- 292 of the Grade II-listed houses, 323 garages and 22 commercial and community buildings.
- Port Sunlight Museum & Gift Shop, including the Edwardian Worker’s Cottage and SoapWorks (now a dedicated learning space for school groups).
- Tackling social issues and promoting community cohesion.
- Managing the visitor destination and raising its profile through partnership working, marketing activities, visitor services, product development, and events.

PSVT employs 55 members of staff to discharge its charitable objectives and we are looking to grow our volunteer numbers across all areas of our operations from landscape gardening to building conservation. We are governed by a Board of Trustees with expertise in marketing and PR, housing, surveying, finance, conservation, landscape, planning, museums, and heritage.

In 2019, PSVT launched its first [5-year strategic plan](#) articulating five strategic objectives for the organisation and village:

1. Conserve and promote Port Sunlight’s unique heritage in a sustainable way
2. Be a financially strong and well-managed, independent charity
3. Deliver high quality services across the estate
4. Realise the potential of Port Sunlight as a leading visitor attraction
5. Be a brilliant place to work

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## **The project**

### **What we have now**

PSVT currently has a main corporate/visitor-focused website ([portsunlightvillage.com](https://portsunlightvillage.com)) alongside a residents’ website ([portsunlightresidents.com](https://portsunlightresidents.com)). The former is outdated and has limited functionality to enable us to meet our audiences’ expectations, while the latter is often underused by the community. We also have a bespoke ‘ticketing hub’ ([tickets.portsunlightvillage.com](https://tickets.portsunlightvillage.com)), used to sell tickets for our visitor attractions and events, as well as to provide an online shop.

We also have several microsites alongside these relating to various projects. These are:

- Virtual tour: [virtual.portsunlightvillage.com](https://virtual.portsunlightvillage.com)
- Drawn Together exhibition: [drawntogether.portsunlightvillage.com](https://drawntogether.portsunlightvillage.com)
- Tour App: [tour.portsunlightvillage.com](https://tour.portsunlightvillage.com)

## What we're looking for

PSVT is looking to commission a partner to design and build a new single website that brings together our current web presence into one destination and experience. It must encompass all that Port Sunlight is and all that we do as an organisation in a user-friendly, sustainable and future-proof way.

As we will be bringing our web presence into one space, we would be interested to see an innovative and cohesive approach to UX in serving our two distinct audiences – 1. our residents/local community and 2. our visitors. A proposed IA further on in this brief provides some steer on this, however we are open to creative yet user-friendly solutions.

We are conscious that our website in many ways serves as the online 'shop window' for Port Sunlight as a whole, encompassing not only PSVT but other stakeholders including businesses, attractions etc. While the website should be distinctly 'ours', it should also be a gateway to discovering the village as a whole for visitors and the community.

Our brand is due to be refreshed in the next 2-3 years, so we are looking for a design that isn't tied too closely to any current branding or aesthetic (outside of our logo, font, and colour palette, which can be changed when the time comes). Rather, we are keen to see responses which propose design elements directly inspired by Port Sunlight's aesthetic and personality, from its Arts and Crafts architecture and picturesque parks to its distinctive history and thriving community. In essence, the website should feel like an online extension of the village.

Ultimately, the website should:

- **Inspire people to visit and take part in our events**
- **Foster a sense of community** for those that live, work or volunteer here
- **Support residents** with helpful information and resources
- **Be the place to explore Port Sunlight's heritage**
- **Encourage support and understanding** of PSVT's work
- **Boost our commercial activity** through ticket bookings and retail sales.

**For your inspiration, other websites we like include:**

[thedockyard.co.uk/](http://thedockyard.co.uk/)

[ironbridge.co.uk](http://ironbridge.co.uk)

[tullie.org.uk/](http://tullie.org.uk/)

[liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/](http://liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/)

[manchester.museum.ac.uk](http://manchester.museum.ac.uk)

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## Content requirements

### What's on

The website should have a built-in functionality to list our events to support PSVT's year-round programming spanning multiple venues and village locations. We need functionality to have a single 'What's on' page, as well as set up event pages that include timings, venues, automatic time-outs, and accessibility info.

As a community-minded organisation, we would also like the ability to create listings for events which are not PSVT events, but which the community and/or general visitors may be interested in that we may wish to promote. It would need to be very clear which events are PSVT and which are not through an appropriate form of tagging and filtering.

We will be looking to potentially introduce a new ticketing supplier, so the events listings should have integration that allows a seamless customer experience. This includes booking tickets to visit Port Sunlight Museum and our walking tours, which form PSVT's main visitor offer.

### **Venues/locations**

As an extension of the above, the website should reflect the village as a site filled with points of interest and visitor attractions, from Port Sunlight Museum through to the Dell park. The What's On/events listing function should allow the creation of venue listing pages or in-page information to include things like addresses, potential Google Maps integration, contact details, accessibility info etc.

### **Online shop**

PSVT has ambitions to grow our commercial capabilities by developing a strong online retail offer and experience to sell high quality products related to Port Sunlight.

While the shopping functionality could be hosted within our chosen ticketing system (not covered by this brief), the online shop should be easily accessible from the homepage/other pages and give us the ability to feature items where relevant. We invite suggestions on how the online shop should sit within the architecture of the website as part of proposals e.g. a shop.portsunlightvillage.com subdomain.

### **Donations**

As a charity, encouraging public donations is a priority for us. While we currently use a third-party donation platform to process donations, links to donate should be highly visible and accessible throughout the website. We would be keen to see solutions which allow flexible 'donate now' CTAs next to relevant content.

### **Transactions**

We would like the ability to provide an online payment portal for PSVT tenants and village residents to pay money to us directly for things like rent. This could also provide us with a platform for supporters to donate to us directly. Any responses should address potential solutions to this which are secure yet low maintenance.

This may also be supported by the ability for customers to create/log in and manage an account within the website.

### **Stories and blogs**

A big opportunity for our website (which isn't being fulfilled currently) is that it should serve as the natural home and destination for online audiences to discover Port Sunlight's history and stories. As a heritage organisation with an aim to preserve and promote Port Sunlight, we are keen to have the ability to publish and collect stories from the village's past and present. We will also publish timely (yet evergreen) editorial content alongside this to bring the village's stories to life.

They should be presented in an SEO-friendly way, have the ability to integrate video and audio content, alongside a tagging/filtering functionality.

### **Collections and online exhibitions**

We would like the ability to upload information (title, image/s, description) about objects in PSVT's collections and make them searchable by type/subject, as well as group together these 'collection listings' to form online exhibition pages. For example, we would like the ability to potentially transfer content from [drawntogether.portsunlightvillage.com](http://drawntogether.portsunlightvillage.com) into this format.

We appreciate this may be an ambitious ask within our available budget, so this is something that could be explored in the future, however we are keen to see solutions to hosting this content in proposals.

### **Resident resources**

The residents' section of the website should be an essential resource for Port Sunlight's residents and community, with much of the existing content on [portsunlightresidents.com](http://portsunlightresidents.com) to be migrated across. Essential features must include an online noticeboard – a place for PSVT to share news and updates, as well as give the community the ability to submit content through an online form. Another essential feature is content that assists residents in easily accessing information about how to care for their listed home, as seen [here](#). Solutions must be user-friendly and low maintenance.

### **Newsletter sign ups and contact forms**

An integrated sign up form for PSVT's mailing list is essential, as well as the ability to publish contact/booking forms as needed for things like school booking enquiries.

### **Proposed Information Architecture (not exhaustive)**

- HOME ([portsunlightvillage.com](http://portsunlightvillage.com))
  - VISIT
    - Things to see and do
    - Port Sunlight Museum & Worker's Cottage
    - Walking tours
    - Family visits
    - Group visits
    - Getting here
    - Accessibility
    - Shopping
    - Eating
  - LIVE
    - Moving here
    - Useful information
    - Your listed house
    - Your community
    - Noticeboard
  - WHAT'S ON
    - Events listings
    - Standalone event pages
  - EXPLORE
    - Stories
    - Our collections
    - Blogs
    - Online exhibitions
    - Virtual Tour
  - LEARN
    - Education visits
    - SoapWorks
    - Learning activities
    - Resources
  - ABOUT PSVT
    - About us
    - Our work
    - Staff and Trustees
    - Jobs and volunteering

- Filming
  - Using drones
  - SUPPORT
    - Commemorative benches
    - Corporate sponsors
    - Legacies
    - Special projects
    - The Port Sunlight Lottery
  - SHOP
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## Technical requirements

### A user-friendly CMS

We currently use Wordpress and would prefer to continue using this, however we're open to others which are similarly user-friendly, well-supported and can host multiple admin levels. It must be easy to upload and host a range of content including images, video and audio.

### Mobile optimisation

The website must be mobile-friendly, with a mobile-first philosophy approach to the design.

### Hosting, support and maintenance

We will be looking for you to host, support and maintain the website on a rolling yearly basis.

### Google Analytics

Measuring our website's impact and engagement is very important to us, with more work to be done in the future to develop this, so we will need you to set us up with GA4 and any other tools you would recommend.

### API integration

Full integration with APIs including Mailchimp (our mailing list provider), ticketing CMS etc.

### Content modules

The ability to create and cross-pollinate content modules/'teasers' on pages across the website would be ideal.

### Accessibility

Accessibility should underpin the design and functionality of the website, with this being a key consideration from conception. It should be compliant with relevant web accessibility standards. We may explore the use of a Recite Me assistive toolbar (or similar), either as part of this brief or separately in the future.

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## Budget

The budget for the design, build, testing of the website is **£15-20k (+ VAT)**

As a charity, it is important we make the best use of our funds and so we would prefer to aim for the lower end of this range, however the upper end of the range has been provided so that we can consider suggested extras that may support our aims and vision for the website. As a result, we would appreciate itemised costings being included in any proposals.

Going forward, we have a budget of around £2k for annual hosting and maintenance/support costs.

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## Timings

We are looking to move at pace with this project, and would be hoping to launch the fully-functioning new website by **March 2024**, though there is some flexibility to go beyond this date or approach this as a soft launch with some elements of the build to be published later. This can be discussed at interviews.

Tender process opens: **15 November 2023**

Tender submission deadline: **3pm, 6 December 2023**

Shortlist interviews (online or in-person): **Week commencing 11 December 2023**

Appointment and project start: **15 December 2023**

Project completion: **Ideally 25 March 2024**

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## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

PSVT is actively working to be a diverse and inclusive organisation. As part of PSVT's commissioning practice, we strongly encourage submissions from people who are from the Global Ethnic Majority, Disabled, Neurodiverse, D/deaf, LGBTQ+, and/or from working-class backgrounds.

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## Reporting relationships

You will report to Brian Pilkington, Marketing and Communications Manager at Port Sunlight Village Trust, for the duration and completion of this project. You may liaise with other members of the PSVT team as required, as well as existing agencies/developers we currently work with.

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## Submissions

We appreciate how time-consuming and stretching it can be to complete tender submissions, particularly for creative projects, so we have aimed to make the submission process for this as practical as possible.

All submissions should include:

**What you'll do** – an initial outline of how you would creatively and technically fulfil the brief. Please note we don't expect completed or even drafted designs, we just need to get a good sense of what you'll do.

**How you'll do it** – tell us how you would approach and deliver this project, including timelines.

**What you've done before** – provide two or three recent examples of relevant projects you have delivered.

**How much it will cost** – include an itemised quote, roughly outlining the costs involved to fulfil this brief (please note, this doesn't need to be too detailed).

**Hosting and support** – we would also like to understand how hosting and ongoing support will be managed/provided beyond the completion of the website. We would prefer a fixed monthly fee.

Please submit your response to:

- Brian Pilkington, Marketing and Communications Manager:  
[b.pilkington@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:b.pilkington@portsunlightvillage.com)
- Jean Milton, Director of Heritage: [j.milton@portsunlightvillage.com](mailto:j.milton@portsunlightvillage.com)

For any questions or further information, please contact Brian Pilkington.