

Heritage responds -
**Taking positive action
on climate change**

Case study

Port Sunlight Village Trust Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS)

Port Sunlight Village Trust



A ten-year strategy to improve the climate change resilience for Port Sunlight Village Trust (PSVT) and the conservation area in its care. Including a baseline study, vision statement, aims, objectives and performance indicators, the ESS describes how PSVT will work in partnership with stakeholders to achieve its environmental sustainability vision.

“By 2030, we will improve our environmental performance and support our workforce, community, visitors and partners to be more sustainable, to create a greener future for everyone.”

Port Sunlight village was founded by William Lever in 1888 to create a community for the workers in his soap factory. Port Sunlight Village was designated as a conservation area in 1978 and comprises over 900 listed buildings and structures including the Grade I listed war memorial.

PSVT is responsible for:

- 130 acres of landscaped parkland and gardens,
- 292 Grade II-listed houses,
- 15 listed community or commercial buildings,
- Port Sunlight Museum & Gift Shop, including the Edwardian Worker's Cottage and SoapWorks,
- A dedicated centre for formal and informal learning.

- A diverse group of monuments (listed and unlisted), museum collection, and village archive.
- 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.

Delivered with match funding from Museum Development North West, PSVT commissioned the ESS to adopt a joined up and strategic approach to improve environmental sustainability across the organisation.

Based on the UN's Sustainability Goals, the ESS defines PSVT's vision for environmental sustainability and describes key actions for improvement in six areas; Energy, Water, Waste, Transportation, Business and Greening the Village.

As custodians of a heritage site with a diverse set of stakeholders PSVT has an important and exciting role to play in changing attitudes and behaviours as well as improving climate change resilience in the built and natural environments.

PSVT adopted its first environmental sustainability policy in 2011. However, PSVT did not have a holistic understanding of its organisational impact or opportunities for improvement; this was seen as a risk and lost opportunity. The ESS enabled organisation-wide understanding which will be embedded in all areas of business and inform priorities, budgets and actions going forward.

The ESS includes a report with comprehensive baseline study, environmental vision, aims and action plan for delivery. Supporting documents include an opportunity matrix for improving thermal performance of PSVT's listed built assets and a more detailed energy study.

Group working and consultation across the organisation were central to the development of the ESS. PSVT's working group included members of all directorates and a member of the board of trustees. Engagement helped to clarify baseline performance and to ensure that the action plan was specifically created for the charity and the site.

Through adoption of the ESS, PSVT has committed to reducing its environmental impact year on year, reducing the impacts to the environment from its facilities and operation, and championing biodiversity and sustainability as it cares for its natural and built heritage. The ESS will be implemented over the next ten years to allow PSVT to further reduce its impact on the environment whilst encouraging the community and visitors to do the same.

The ESS covers carbon emissions, biodiversity, waste, water, energy, transportation and business activities. The ESS was adopted in June 2021, so progress cannot yet be mapped. However, the action plan includes indicators to track performance.

Image:

Port Sunlight Village Trust