

# SENIOR COUNCIL FOR DEVON

## Annual General Meeting

Exeter Corn Exchange, George Street

Exeter EX1 1BU

Thursday 1st October 2009 at 10.30 a.m.

### 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Bill Jordan, outgoing Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the first AGM of the Senior Council for Devon. He gave an outline of the history of the Senior Council and how it had progressed over the last eighteen months. Bill then introduced each current member of the Board and thanked them for all of their hard work. See Appendix 1 for the full opening remarks.

### 2. Annual Report (A copy had been given to all present)

- i) Secretary's Report: Ken Crawford said that our influence was starting to work within local and national government i.e. the national dementia strategy, the review of concessionary fares and closure of pharmacies had been removed from the Green Paper. The privatisation of care homes was totally reviewed and this was down to people like the SCfD and others. Ken outlined the 18 months of hard work by DCC, PCT, Peter Fletcher Associates and all of the SCfD volunteers and gave thanks to all. He explained how the limited company was formed and the difficulties the initial ten members of the Board faced: a great deal had been done but there was still a lot more that could be achieved.
- ii) Treasurer's Report: John Stedman summarised the funding income and reported that the organisation needed to be focusing on ensuring continuity of funding when the agreement comes to an end in March 2011. It had been necessary to introduce financial controls from the outset so resource packs were distributed to all branches in May 2008 and more user friendly packs in February 2009. He thanked Sally for all of her hard work on the organisation's finances. £62,000 has been allocated for expenditure by groups with varying amounts depending on the size of the groups. £31,000 was spent on equipment during the first financial year. JS went through the income and expenditure account and the balance sheet for the financial year ending 31/03/09. The meeting unanimously accepted the financial report.
- iii) Dementia: Ken Crawford. Dementia had taken a high priority within the SCfD. In August 2008 the SCfD became aware of a consultation event in Plymouth and there were two days' notice to collate Devon's views. There was a lack of representation from rural Devon and no representation from DCC. SCfD organised another consultation event in Barnstaple and 100+ people attended. The results were collated and fed back and were

included in the wording of the Government strategy. The National Dementia Strategy has now been published and Devon is committed to implementing it. One of the positive results of the Barnstaple meeting was finding out about the Devon Dementia Carer's Pathway written by Jim Delves and David Light. The Senior Council has since supported the printing and distribution of this impressive document and Ken Crawford thanked the two authors for their efforts in producing it.

- iv) Health and Social Care: Corrie Spencer. Corrie and Michael Pagram were both involved in resisting the planned sale of care homes by DCC to Shaw Trust, who later withdrew. SCfD had been involved in complex discussions with DCC on the planning of all aspects of care services. Corrie gave an explanation of funding bid for carers' health checks and consultations with carers to ensure a good quality of life. SCfD is being continually asked to attend meetings regarding this and other health and social care issues. SCfD felt that a wider membership involvement was important and so held area discussions, taking up issues from members. The main aim now is to build on focus groups. The SCfD have recently attended a meeting with the DCC leader which was very positive and he advocates supporting ideas and working together. The SCfD are also starting to be approached to help and assist in planning and commissioning of services in Devon.
- v) Intergenerational: Bill Jordan. Bill felt that from its inception SCfD regarded intergenerational work as important. He gave some good examples of SCfD working with young people. SCfD are also involved in the schools' Civics Programme and how young people in one area will be giving ITC tuition to older people. This is a step in the right direction and promotes a better understanding between young and old. Bill mentioned 'Don't judge us before you know us' poster campaign and film making exercise which SCfD had initially been involved with. More recently the Senior Council have had a request from a Youth Parliament representative about supporting fare concessions for younger people. The SCfD are doing quite well but need to do better and this is an area which it is going to concentrate on.
- vi) Membership: Ken Crawford. Membership has grown by 63% in the last year. Ken introduced Peter Fletcher who set up the SCfD in March 2008. Groups were thanked for all of their hard work and effort which had been put into developing the SCfD. As of today, the membership total was 1,265 with three groups - Exeter, Ivybridge and Okehampton - topping 100, which was a good target for the rest. BME membership is 3.7% thanks to the efforts of the HIKMAT Group (which means wisdom). With regard to local groups, some are growing at a

faster rate than others. The CEU have been engaged to look at our membership and to train local groups in capacity building.

- vii) Publicity: Margaret Coles. The Newsletter was now set up and a quarterly issue being printed on a regular basis. A general A4 folded leaflet is now available. She was trying to encourage all groups to have a local leaflet and a template was in the process of being produced, if required.

A branch newsletter would have a positive impact and Ivybridge have already expertly produced their own. Margaret pointed out that some may want to emulate them but smaller branches could consider something less ambitious

The publicity group would also produce folders and packs which would contain information about the SCfD and these would be available to hand out to all parish councils and local organisations to spread the word.

A new PowerPoint presentation was available for group speakers to use and DS is prepared to go round and give a talk to potential new members in all areas.

The website is a large and important area of our publicity. An explanation was given of how it was set up and how it has now served its purpose. A sub-group had been set up to investigate and develop ways of producing our new website. The new SCfD website will be up and running ready for the December Assembly meeting.

Press packs are also being developed.

- viii) Transport: Ken Crawford. AGILE had a transport group and this provided the core of the SCfD group. The group had expanded to include two representatives from each district council to reach out to the corners of Devon. The SCfD Transport group has responded to eight national consultations, been involved in an all-party enquiry on concessionary fares, accessibility to taxis and trains, bus passenger representation and local bus service support, amongst other topics.

Ken is going to set up four or five areas (North, South, East, West and Central) to look at truly-local issues and the central group is to take a strategic role. A meeting has been set up with DCC and will take place in the near future.

Annual Report adopted by the meeting,

### 3. Election of Officers for the Board

Because of ambiguity about the constitution, all the Board members had decided to resign and to apply for nomination to the Board. As only ten nominations were received, it was not necessary to hold an election.

Election results:

Bill Jordan (Exmouth) -

Chair

Ken Crawford (Okehampton) - Secretary  
John Stedman (Tiverton) - Treasurer  
Yvonne Wardrop (Exmouth) - Vice-Chair  
Corrie Spencer (Dawlish)  
Margaret Coles (Holsworthy) Derek  
Pedder (Sidmouth)  
Graham Bowen (Great Torrington)  
Roger Trapani (Seaton)  
Jean Daley (Exeter)

Following a discussion where a member was not clear how the nomination and voting system worked, acceptance of the new Board members was put to the vote and was carried overwhelmingly with only one person voting against. Derek Pedder informed the meeting that the constitution was going through amendments. The new Board was now accepted and officers accepted their positions.

4. Appointment of Auditors

John Stedman informed the meeting that the accounts had been verified by chartered accountants, Wortham Jaques of Crediton. He found them to be very satisfactory and professional. A vote was taken to reappoint them and this was carried unanimously.

5. Coffee

6. Guest Speakers: John Coxon, DWP and Philip Johnson, Government Office

John's theme was 'Building a Society for All Ages'. The government had published the document in July 2009.

He invited members to become part of discussion and there was a copy of the report for each member, along with an invitation to submit feedback.

See Appendix 2 for a full report of John's presentation.

7. 1000th Member Presentation

Steve Perryman MBE, Director of Exeter City Football Club, made this presentation. The lucky member to receive a bottle of pink Champagne was Janet Adams of Kingsbridge.

8. Philip Johnson from the Government Office

Philip explained the role of the Government Office and the role of seniors' agenda, later life and older people.

He gave an explanation of the nine regional offices based in Plymouth and Bristol who all work closely with Jim Knight.

See Appendix 3 for Philip's full presentation.

Derek Pedder enquired about the timescale from local level to national level. Philip answered that it depended on the issue. Forum meetings were held on a quarterly basis and, if it was quite a practical issue, it could feed up quickly but, if more complex, then dialogue surrounds could take longer.

Tony Simpson informed Philip that his local authority has withdrawn free safety alarms from over 80s and that the SCfD had strongly objected to it. Philip's response was that he couldn't explain but needs to hear about this issue. He didn't know if it has been withdrawn from all over the country but will enquire when he gets back to his office. He referred to the 'law of unintended consequences'; where a local authority or other agencies are fulfilling statutes then that is all right but, if a piece of legislation is leading to strangeness or affecting services, then central government can have an influence over the outcomes.

With regard to the South West Seniors' Network, he applauded how well we have been doing and when asked whether funding will be coming down from government, he said that he was not aware of any central funding being directed to SCfD to continue.

He was also asked 'Why we do have Regional Assemblies?' as many people feel that the South West does not exist in the eyes of central government. John Coxon responded by saying that it was certainly on his map: he meets with other people in the South West and he listens to and accepts comments.

## 9. Lunch

## 10. 'Nothing Personal' play by Allen Sadler, Totnes Group

This play was written by Allen highlighting the effects of removing people from care homes through closure, and also how finance can control people's emotions, especially greed. It also brought attention to the generation gap and perception of the old by the younger generations which can have a marked effect on decision-making.

The play was well received by the meeting and thanks were given to both Allen and the players for all of their hard work.

The meeting closed at 3.40pm

## **Present:**

**Members:** Ashburton: Mrs M J Normans, Axminster: Mrs Collins, Barbara A De Bourd, Pat Powell, Mrs P Johnson, Angela Wallace, Eileen Upham, Arthur Upham, Barnstaple: Ken Summerfield, Brian Clifton, Bideford: Audrey Hollins, Ruth Nugent, Alan Rayner, Patricia Davey, Keith Shaw, Trudi Shaw, Crediton: George Palin, Mary Collins, Walter Brown, Neil Easden, Culm Valley: Bridget Bimson, Mrs E M Attfield, Ann McClements, Pat Regardsoe, Mrs J H Smith, Pam Partridge, Mrs Mills, Jo Butters, Tim Butters, Dawlish: Corrie Spencer, Pamela Milward, Gail Upton, Exeter: Molly Walker, Gerald Reardon, Eileen Barber, Sheila Wilson, Jean Daley, Amelia Redding, Margaret Hammond, Peter Dunning, Mary Cox, Jean Heard, John Taverner, S A J Hooper, Barbara Scott-Maxwell, Roy Deeks, Joan Bond, Christopher Williams, Mrs Choudhury, John Crowter Jones, Abdul Choudhary, Robert Leaper, Fiona Hutton, Mrs P L Pang, Mr T Pang, Mrs L Pang, Mrs S L Wong, Mr W M Wong, Chie Chan, Mrs K H Chan, Mr Kwok Cheung, Jean Palin, Mrs Durstan, Bob Deed, Joan James, L Bennett, Fakhira Ashfaq, Tairq, Mr Muhamed, Exmouth: Mrs Patten, Beryl Lambert, Yvonne Wardrop, Joy Robinson, Bill Jordan, Jane Jordan, Tony Boston, Great Torrington: John Tattershall, Graham Bowen, Edna Bowen, Roy Catley, Holsworthy: Margaret Coles, Honiton: June Brown, Pamela Prior, Mr D J Davis, Mr E F Davis, Tony Smith, Shirley Smith, Tony Simpson, Mr Payton, Mrs Payton, Evelyn Assey, Robert Williams, Kathy Swain, Victor Kemp, Ilfracombe: Alan Green, Nancy Green, Diane Antoniazzi, Ivybridge: Pam Ryder, Paul Jones, Heather Jones, Kingsbridge: John Cowling, Anne Cowling, Una Teal, Malcolm Hipwell, Sheila Hall, Janet Adams, Newton Abbot: George Husband, Cllr Ann Lonsdale, Edna Wickham, Anne-Marie Morris, Okehampton: Margaret Woolacott, Ralph Day, Mr Woolacott, Anne Crawford, Ken Crawford, Mary Morse, Ottery St Mary: Sheila Jelly, Seaton: Laurie Phillips, Roger Trapani, Bob Buskin, Sidmouth: Derek Pedder, Joyce Robinson, Henry Robinson, South Molton: Kate Lowe, Pixie Maynard, Tavistock: Martin Taylor, Anthony Sidall, Teignmouth: Jim Corben, Mrs E Brierley, Thelma Davis, Tiverton: David Fradgely, Richard Watkins, Sue Watkins, Bob Gollner, John Stedman, Iris Mackie, Totnes: Roy Abraham, Allen Saddler, Non-affiliated members: Andrew Murray, Elli Pang.

**Non-Members:** John Coxon - DWP, Kate Fenton - LINK, Dave Light - Carer's Pathway, Jim Delves - Carer's Pathway, Katie Chaplin - CVS, Peter Fletcher - Peter Fletcher Associates, Geoff Mitchell - SW Seniors' Network,

**In Attendance:** Sally Lougher – SCfD, Andrea Chick – SCfD.

**Apologies:** Axminster: Katherine Stringer, Barnstaple: Michael Pagram, Pearl Walsh, Bideford: Brian Halstead, Mr and Mrs Fulford, Councillor Fulford, Dawlish: Audrey Thorp, Frederick Young, Exeter: A. J. Hyams, Mr. and Mrs. Burgess, Margaret Clark, Exmouth: Diana Budgen, Hilary Higgins, Susan Mendham, Honiton: Mr. and Mrs. Carrington, Ilfracombe: Mr. R J Davis, Ivybridge: Agnes Heaps, Alan Willman, Alfred Kings, Harry Foot, Mrs C Brook, V Kingsland, Pamela Johns, Mrs Poutney, Okehampton: Isabel Chorlton, Sidmouth: Shelagh Morse, Dr. J Brittain, Tavistock: Christopher Kirwin, D. Curtis, Teignmouth: Mr and Mrs Tetin, Mary Awcock, Tiverton: D. Nonakowa, Desi Fradgely, Torrington: Dr. Cramp, Totnes: Judy Westacott, Peter Kiddle, West Devon: Isobel Houlden, Parish Councils: Newton Ferrers.

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## Appendix 1

### Chairman's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Hello, good morning everyone

Welcome to the first AGM of the Senior Council for Devon.

It is an appropriate day for us to meet since it is Older People's Day which is being celebrated - or proclaimed - nationally.

Particularly pleasing is the large attendance today and the opportunity it affords us to network, exchange experiences and honestly assess our progress to date.

Today, I am sure, will prove to be interesting, informative, pleasurable and memorable. Having with us Mr Steve Perryman to present the prize to the 1000th member of the Senior Council for Devon is a great privilege. Being entertained by the Totnes group of players with the much-acclaimed play by Senior Council for Devon member Allen Sadler is a treat in store.

The Annual Report, I believe, accurately sets out the stage of development our organisation has reached and the priorities we must address. This means having a proper regard for both the range and volume of activities we undertake and the quality and relevance of those activities.

Clearly, as I indicated in my foreword to the Annual Report, inevitably in the early days of the formation of a relatively-large and complex organisation such as the Senior Council for Devon, there will be teething troubles. Despite some setbacks, there is reason to believe that we have made a creditable start to being reputable representatives of older people within the context of caring about the quality of life of the whole community.

Administering the Branches, the Assembly and the Board is a major undertaking, as is communicating with 1,200 members in 28 or so locations. Even using the 'tool of the age' - computing - effective communication is difficult given the size and rurality of Devon. Yet for all that, the Senior Council for Devon has progressed and done so with an administrative staff of two, neither of whom is full time.

We are, of course, mindful that the Senior Council for Devon is part of a national pilot scheme involving two other counties and five towns/cities. Today we shall be interested to hear from John Coxon and Philip Johnson - senior officials from the Department for Work and Pensions and the Government Office respectively - about the progress of our sister organisations,

Being aware of good practices elsewhere is obviously a means of improving our own performance. Similarly we need to ensure that best practices in our branches are known as widely as possible. Mindful of this, our publicity group is making a concerted effort to improve our various means of publicising our activities. The latest Senior Council for Devon newsletter (Everyone's Tomorrow) cites 23 activities which Branches and the organisation centrally have been involved in. These activities are a good foundation for our organisation to play a significant role on behalf of older people and to raise awareness of issues bearing on the quality of life of all age groups. We would contend that this approach is very much in line with the aims of the legislation at present going through Parliament, namely the principles embodied in the Equalities Bill. These principles are that the Equality Bill (eventually the Act) will ban age discrimination in terms of health and adult social care.

At a recent South West region review meeting related to Age Discrimination, your representatives were able to report on the practical work undertaken by our organisation, particularly care in the field of mental health. The publication "Dementia Carer's Pathway Devon" and the work being done concerning memory cafes were cited as examples of keeping up awareness of the need for caring and medical services to be available - as far as humanly possible - across the whole age range. The two large public meetings at Barnstaple and Exmouth dealing with dementia (with more than a hundred present at Exmouth) were other examples of the positive work of the Senior Council for Devon. Further meetings will be organised in the west and the south of the county, when we hope all the branches in those areas will be involved, especially as a part of their development.

Another point worthy of note is the contact the Senior Council has had with the Devon Association of Parish Councils regarding dementia awareness issues. This co-operation is another example of positive action and hopefully allays any suggestion that we are a gaggle of talking shops..

Further to this and to underline the point, our Vice Chair - Yvonne Wardrop - will speak about a large event that the Senior Council for Devon will be holding in March 2010. This is a follow-up to the Everyone's Tomorrow Conference held at Newton Abbot Racecourse in 2007. The event will be open to a wide number of relevant organisations and individuals and will give an indication of the progress that has been made with respect to improving services, especially in relation to the over 50s.

Additionally, I would like to place on record that we try as a Board and in the Branches to work associatively with organisations that are connected with older people. Patently there are dangers of duplication so we are systematically inviting bodies such as Age Concern and Help the Aged to determine how best we can reinforce one another's work.

With respect to Devon LINK, we encourage our Branches to be involved and I represent our organisation on the LINK Steering Group.

In these closing remarks, I think it worth emphasizing that the Board and the Assembly are aware of the need to assist those Branches which are having difficulties in getting established. This is one of our priorities, as is ensuring that all our members are kept involved - especially those people who are virtually housebound.

Equally, it is right that I emphasize that the Senior Council for Devon endeavours to be evidence-based in our findings, and that we jealously guard our independence. Increasingly we are building specialist, experienced and knowledgeable groups to guide our work of trying to be the eyes, ears and voice of older people.

But before moving on to the Annual Report, may I introduce the platform party. Not everyone here today in the body of the theatre will have met or seen our current Board members. They are:

Graham Bowen  
Margaret Coles  
Ken Crawford (Secretary)  
Janet Crocker  
Bill Jordan (Chairman)  
Derek Pedder  
Corrie Spencer  
John Stedman (Treasurer)  
Yvonne Wardrop (Vice Chairman)

Michael Pagram has resigned.

The result of the election for the new Board will be given later. The Secretary's membership report gives the background to this.

And now to the Annual Report which, on behalf of the Board, I will commend for your approval. In compliance with standard practice, I will deal with the report page by page and lead-members will comment as they think fit.

Bill Jordan  
Chairman - Senior Council for Devon

## Appendix 2

### John Coxon

John began by saying that it was great to be there as he was a big fan of the Senior Council for Devon. He congratulated members for actually getting the organisation up and running and all of the great work that had been done and that we were doing.

He had been to another event to celebrate UK Older People's Day and this highlights the huge contribution made by seniors to society and aims to tackle negatives and to support everyone to feel part of society. It also brings different generations together and creates safer and friendly neighbourhoods for all. Seniors can pass on a wealth of experience and younger people often enjoy the feeling of being valued.

The Strategy itself: more people are living longer than before which is a cause for celebration. In 2007, for the first time in the UK, there were more people over state pension age than there were children. One in every 25 babies born today will live to become at least 100 years of age and some over 120. What this does mean is the future ageing society/generations is actually with us today. The scale of change will shape the communities and families and we need to act now. The government's new strategy aims to provide a vision of what the future will be. This is a proposal and invites discussion. There will be some changes but they will not happen overnight. Some people may say "That won't apply to me" but John guarantees that it will apply to all in the room and a large part to every individual.

He wanted to bring to life the strategy and share the approach and main proposals which were Individuals, Family, Businesses, Public services and Communities.

He went on to say that the aims are to move us closer to a true society for all ages. There is a great deal of detail and discussion but it will also rally important new proposals:

1. One-stop shop service – bring together all advice.
2. Keeping active-and-well package.
3. New opportunities to work, stay connected and share experiences.
4. Access and design of products and services.

From the point of view of the individual planning:

Improving financial support – provide advice.

Government state and private pensions reforms.

Support and provide information advice – one-stop shop, WEB, phone and face-to-face.

Wide variety of activities, sport, educational etc. Sense of community.

Maintaining health and fitness.

Real issue – don't know where to go or what is available.

Active at 60 package – information about entitlement and opportunities.

All-in-One Cards – local councils issuing, bus passes, libraries, swimming pools, shop discounts etc.

Proposal to discuss with local government.

Health prevention package – wrong wording. Provide information on dietary, hospital discharge, medical conditions, fall prevention – help people in the home, their needs and make their lives better.

Recognising the role of grandparents:

More active grandparents will play an active role in their families' lives. Changing roles.

Families and relationship Green Paper in Autumn – summit.

Default Retirement Age

Allow to keep working for longer if they want to and for businesses to tap into experience seniors can bring.

Review brought forward to 2010. Giving up work early but didn't want to – no flexibility in work to carry on.

Age Positive Initiative

Extending the initiative to help improve employer attitudes on senior workers.

Demographic change – New Markets – needs of people as they get much older.

Innovation and growth team of experts from business, academia and the age sector to identify potential market opportunities from demographic change.

Public Services

Legislative changes – Equalities bill.

Need to engage with people and focussing all service providers to consider the needs of everyone.

UK forum on Ageing – Philip to speak about this later on.

Funding being provided to further promote innovation at a local level.

Seniors' lifeblood – volunteering etc. Especially rural areas. 5.5 m by central government to fund intergenerational projects.

Transport particular issue in the South West. Driving for life programme – re- skilling to keep up with modern driving conditions – help people make the most of public transport.

10 questions are specific. Open debate – some particular issues and would be really pleased to be fed back by either groups or individuals.

John went on to say that this was a great opportunity for people to have their say and the closing date for comments is the 12th October 2009 (later revised to the 26th October 2009).

A member from the floor asked, "What happens to the consultation when and if there is a change of government?" John replied by saying that the drivers and imperatives don't change. With regard to the financial side - particularly retirement ages and pensions - the providers diminish but needers grow. This feedback will be published in a government response in December.

Another member brought up the subject of East Devon District Council not giving a free swim to over 60s swimmers. Apparently they refused free swimming because too many old people lived in East Devon. John suggested that the SCfD need to get together with other groups to approach this issue. Bill Jordan informed the meeting that SCfD branches in East Devon will be having an early meeting with EDDC regarding this. John responded by saying that this was important and that it needs to be fed into government as they like to hear those views. They are also trying to set up processes where Whitehall will hear these comments.

Peter Dunning brought up the subject of Village Agents being adopted in Wiltshire and John commented that Village Agents had become a very important link.

## Appendix 3

### Philip Johnson

The Government Office represents eleven Whitehall departments in the region have no tax policy and deal with a whole host of issues including transports, skills, economy, regeneration and later life issues.

They also help national policies to work in all parts of England both locally, like Devon, and regionally - the South West. They try and work with local partners, local authorities, government agencies but have to be careful as local government has its own democratic responsibilities. They can apply pressure but it is not for central government to go around telling them what to do – they work together and share good practice. Audits are not carried out on local authorities/partners as they are working with and supporting them, and occasionally, to challenge them. Philip also explained that it was new for them too. Whitehall departments had also been on a journey as central government used to be only interested in happenings nationally, but now the government was involved in 97 regional development agencies. Over the last few years central government was far more interested in what has been happening in local places, and were finding ways of implementing them locally, not just nationally, and that all opposition parties are thinking the in the same way.

Concerning feedback: what works and what doesn't and the need to work out why. Philip felt that communication and feedback with partnerships would hopefully influence Whitehall departments. His Government Office worked with the DWP and last year developed a new role in working on later life agenda and he felt that the seniors was a brilliant agenda to work on. It captures people's imaginations and has risen up the political agenda. He stressed the point that government needs to support and challenge local partner organisations to improve their services for older people and prepare for an ageing population. There is also the need to identify and help organisations and networks share good practice.

There would also be support for the SW Regional Forum on Ageing and help it to engage older people to influence Government policy. He was keen to learn from us and similar groups.

He wants to:

Raise the profile of the Regional Forum on Ageing;

Help it to link up with local forums;

Help the Regional Forum make an impact nationally ... and the really big issues and challenges ahead:

Better services for many more older people;

Encouraging people to prepare for later life;

Changing society's perceptions of older people.

Philip said that his office feels strongly about what older people are all about as demand on services can come across as negative. We need to look at positive

contributions older people can give and get society's attitude changed towards the older person.

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