

Happy Days

February features Safer Internet Day, an international event designed to support professionals and parents in helping children remain safe online. This year the theme is "Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online" – a big theme for tiny tots...and their parents. There are some great resources available to support parents initiating those all-important conversations and we know it's never too early to start. Childnet's DigiDuck books give parents a great opportunity to share a story and start talking with little ones about online safety. Visit www.childnet.com for all the DigiDuck stories and more. Happy Days Nursery supports #SID2023.

We know many families are currently finding finances a little tough but there is help available for parents needing childcare. The Government website, www.childcarechoices.gov.uk, details how parents can access support via the Tax-Free Childcare Scheme and Early Years Education Funding for 2, 3- and 4-Year Olds. The Tax-Free Childcare Scheme can be used for all ages and allows parents to receive up to £2,000 per year towards childcare costs. Check out our website or call the office for more information.

Sessions at Happy Days are available for Summer and Autumn 2023. Please contact us early to avoid disappointment or, for more information, please do not hesitate to telephone the office (01795 424348), or visit our website www.happydaysuk.co.uk.



BUSINESS FOCUS

Want to get your business featured in our monthly Business Focus Feature? Showcase your business, tell Iwadians who you are, what you do etc, and get into every home in Iwade - free of charge! We try to showcase one business per month. Email us: the.iwade.observer@gmail.com

Hi, my name's Nicola and I live in Iwade with my partner Jakea and our dogs Doogle and Athena. Just before Christmas I launched Nic's Dog Retreat, a 4 star, fully licenced dog boarding business, based out of our home in Iwade.



I am absolutely loving looking after everyone's fur babies. Doogle and Athena really enjoy having new friends to stay too.

When I set up Nic's Dog Retreat, my aim was to create a true home-from-home environment for your dog. I am fully insured, first aid trained, DBS checked and recognised by Swale as a licenced dog boarder after months of hard work! The service I offer will be tailored to cater for your dog's needs and, however large or small, your dogs will be welcomed into our home.

I love animals and grew up with horses and dogs.

And have lots of experience of all sorts of dogs, from my own family dogs and working in a local kennel to caring for highly strung police and protection dogs.

If you would like your dog to board with us, we start with a relaxed Meet and Greet at my home, followed by an overnight trial - so even if you haven't planned your holidays or some time away, please feel free to get in touch.

You can find and message us on Facebook, search for Nic's Dog Retreat, or contact me by text or phone on my mobile on 07917 832106 or by email at nicdogretreat@outlook.com

Nicola, Jake, Doogle and Athena
Nic's Dog Retreat



THE IWADE OBSERVER

FEBRUARY 2023

The Iwade Observer would like to wish Connie Kilby a massive Happy 100th birthday for February 7th. Connie is a long time resident of Iwade and has been a great friend to the church over many years. We hope you enjoy your big day.

Swale Ladies Who Latte

- Are you a lady business owner?
- Do you live in or service the Swale area?
- Would you like to meet more like-minded business people?

If you answered YES to these questions, you need to join us every month at the Swale Ladies who Latte networking group. Our group has been running in Iwade for 5 years, and is going from strength to strength. When we started we only had 3-4 ladies, now we regularly host 15+ ladies each month.

We meet every third Wednesday of the month (apart from August) at The Barn in Iwade from 10am - 12pm. There is a small fee of £3 which includes refreshments. There is FREE parking at The Barn too...

The group prides itself on being relaxed, friendly & welcoming.

Our next meeting is on February 15th and we'd love to meet you.

Please check out our Facebook group @Swale Ladies Who Latte Group for more information.



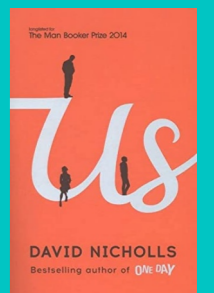
Iwade Reading and Book Club

At our January meeting we were very low in numbers, but it was good to see those who came and we hope for higher numbers at our February meeting.

We reviewed *The Last House on the Cliff* by Anne Wyn Clark; which was enjoyed by most of us. It is a psychological thriller with a spooky element set on Anglesey, N Wales. The main characters are Lowri and her daughter Ruby, it is a suspenseful and atmospheric story with family secrets, death, lies, a missing child and a creepy house and proved to be quite a page turner. A recommended read. Thanks to Ann for stepping into the breach to provide refreshments this month

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, 14th February 2023 in the Barn at 10.30.

We will be reviewing *Us* by David Nicholls. Happy reading in 2023.



Iwade Men's Breakfast Club

The Men's Breakfast Club held their annual Christmas get together on 6th December, and enjoyed a light lunch (a departure from our usual breakfast!!) combined with a very convivial couple of hours of lively conversation.

Keith presented our resident "chefs" Pat, Sylvia and Anne with chocolates thanking them for their much appreciated work during the year.

Next meeting 7th February 2023.
For more info ring Ron on 07398109878, or just turn up on the day!



If you are a man of a certain age who would like to join us we meet the first Tuesday of the month at 9.40 am at Iwade Barn for two hours for bacon and sausage butties, tea, coffee, chats and occasional guest speakers. You'll be very welcome.

MONDAY FRIENDSHIP GROUP

A belated Happy New Year to all our members. We enjoyed a Christmas buffet lunch on December 12th when about 25 of us got together for games, quizzes, chat and plenty of food. Where has the time gone since then?!

The group has continued to grow since Covid restrictions were lifted and we now regularly have upwards of 18 - 20 members at each meeting. We continue to meet fortnightly on a Monday at the Barn and February meetings will be on the 6th and the 20th then into March on the 6th and continuing fortnightly.

We were saddened to hear of the death of our founding member Joan Exley just before Christmas and a small contingent attended Joan's funeral at The Garden of England Crematorium on 18th January. Joan was instrumental in setting up the group to provide a setting for people new to Iwade, for people who'd lost a spouse or partner and generally to help older people come together in friendship. Her vision has gone from strength to strength and she will be missed.

If you'd like to come long to meet and make new friends then please note the dates above - you are more than welcome to just turn up and try us out! We often just chat with a cuppa and a biscuit. We have quizzes, games, member talks, and other activities and have occasional speakers.

We promise you a warm welcome !!

Sittingbourne and Sheppey Conservative Association

The Sittingbourne and Sheppey Conservative Association is currently looking for a potential candidate to stand in Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow ward alongside Cllr Roger Clark at the Swale Borough Council elections this May.

All applicants must have a passion for representing local people's views, looking after the interests of their local area and be sympathetic to the aims and values of the Conservative Party.

The Association has a strong, supportive and friendly team and would welcome anyone interested in becoming a candidate.

If you are interested or would like further information, please contact:
office@sittingbournesheppeyconservatives.org.uk

Look out for The Shepherd's Crook!!

The last Saturday of each month at the Barn

FLOOD ACTION GROUP

Following the flooding in May 2018 a flood action group was formed in the village supported by the National Flood Forum. Multi-agency meetings were arranged with some success but there remains work to be done to help prevent further flooding. I attended a meeting hosted by the National Flood Forum and The Kent Flood Action Group who are working on a plan named Building Resilience In Communities (BRIC) with the hope that by working as a group more notice will be taken by the powers that be.

One of their ideas is to build a story-map of each area which would show ponds, streams, drains etc so that problem areas can be identified. David Jordan from the NFF is willing to come to show how to download and maintain a Geographical Information System for the village if a village group is operating.

If anyone is interested in reforming the Flood Action Group please let me know, with the recent heavy rains the village should be prepared. Barrie Whiting, email me at:- cllrbwhiting@iwade-pc.gov.uk

Dear Friends

Gloom, doom, despair and despondency. Does that seem a fair description of how a glance at our world might seem right now? As I write, deep in January, the weather is gloomy, the sparkle of Christmas has passed, many people are suffering from flu and viruses, war continues to rage in Ukraine and the best the news has managed this week is that the UK isn't actually in recession because so much beer was drunk during the World Cup. Not exactly cheering, or a source for great optimism!

So, is it time to withdraw, wringing our hands at the hopelessness of it all, and accepting there is no hope? I don't think so. In the midst of the darkness there are many signs of hope; it's just that sometimes we need to look for them!

The climate crisis is, quite frankly, terrifying in its intensity and implications for so many people, even now. And yet there are glimmers of hope. The hole in the ozone layer, which posed such a threat throughout the 1980s, has been gradually repairing, and is likely to be largely recovered by 2040, thanks to the 1989 Montreal Protocol, an international agreement which helped eliminate 99% of ozone-depleting chemicals. A remarkable, and widely unnoticed, result, which must bring hope. A serious threat was internationally recognised, action was taken, and the result is of immense importance to the whole of humanity. And surely, if that can be done in this area, there is hope for other threats facing our planet.

During 2022, more than a quarter of the UK's grid electricity came from wind power; in one day on late December, more than half the electricity was wind-powered. Technology around renewable energy is exciting and fast-moving, a real source of hope.

Our precious NHS is facing appalling pressures, but in the field of healthcare the advances are astonishing, with major breakthroughs in the treatment of Alzheimer's and cancer announced in recent months.

There is no reason for us to become mired in hopelessness; there are signs of hope. And somehow these make me feel it is worth making a fuss to protect and rebuild those areas of life where the pressures are so damaging, such as the state of the NHS and other public services, and our environment.

And of course, we have the hope that came into the world at Christmas, not in a tinselled, gift-wrapped bauble of sparkly inconsequence, to be packed away once the festivities are over, but as the Son of God, our friend, brother, Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Light shining in the darkness. Who calls on us to be light in the darkness.

Let's shine!
Every blessing

Amanda

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Iwade Patient Participation Group quit!!

Please find hereunder letter sent 18th January to MPA to announce the resignation of the Patient Participation Group after much consideration ...

Medway Practice Alliance Ltd
Suite 9 Kent Space
6-8 Revenge Road
Lordswood
Chatham
Kent

18th January 2023

For the attention of Kerry Rushton

Dear Kerry Rushton,

I write to advise you that members of Iwade PPG held an extraordinary meeting today to discuss their role as a PPG representing patients of Iwade Health Centre.

After long deliberations it was unanimously agreed that all members will resign with immediate effect, and will not enter into any further discussions relating to Iwade Health Centre, or Medway Practice Alliance Ltd.

This was a difficult decision for members after working for 5 years with various providers, and it was agreed that since April 1st 2022, there has been a complete lack of communication from MPA relating to our role as a PPG. We have therefore taken this difficult decision, as we feel we are unable to represent patients in the manner they deserve.

Kind Regards

Graham Pungenti

For and on behalf of all PPG members

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL - MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING - Held on Weds 14 Dec 2022

Present: Cllr. S. Cheeseman – Chair, Cllr. S. Lancashire, Cllr. R. Langham – Vice-Chair, Cllr S Tolhurst
Lynda Fisher, RFO/Acting Clerk

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Simon Cheeseman elected Chair and Ray Langham Vice-Chair.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular new Committee Member, Steve Tolhurst.

Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None.

Public Time

None present

Monitoring the 2022/23 Budget and Accounts

Spending for the period April to November 2022 reviewed against the existing budget. Noted an overspend on printing, due to additional costs relating to the Observer and a minor increase in the insurance premium. Stationery showed an overspend due to the Clerk needing a new telephone and printer but 50% of this cost was reimbursed by Bobbing Parish Council. There was an overspend on Events, but £1000 of this has been reimbursed by grants received from Swale Borough Councillors.

Budget for 2023/24 and Precept

Draft budget prepared by Councillors for submission to the January full Council meeting. It was agreed to recommend that there be no increase in the Precept for 2023/24 and any shortfall to be taken out of reserves.

Any Other Matters Arising

None.

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL - MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - Held on Weds 9 November 2022

Present: Cllr. S. Waters - Vice – Chair, Cllr. D. Waters, Cllr. S. Tolhurst, Cllr. R. Langham
Cllr. P. Hyde, Cllr. S. Lancashire, Cllr. R. Stalley-Moores, Cllr. B. Whiting, County Cllr. M. Baldock,
Lynda Ives, Acting Clerk/RFO, 4 Residents

Welcome and Apologies

The Vice-Chair formally welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Parish Cllrs. Dollimore and Cheeseman and the PCSO.

Visitors/Public Time

Visitors – Residents attended to see if there had been any update regarding the parking issue in Sheerstone – the Vice-Chair advised nothing to date, but the Council is still pushing for a response from Swale/KCC Councils.

A resident complained about the number of lorries in the village going to and from the Pond Farm site; he was advised Swale Borough Council is dealing with this. The same resident again raised the issue of youth provision in the village. It was agreed to place this on the December agenda. Action: Clerk

County and Borough Councillors – County Cllr. Baldock advised that at the last Swale West Parishes meeting it was of concern that quite a few Parish Councils are now considered to be inquorate, due to difficulty in filling Parish Councillor vacancies. Highway Improvement Plans were discussed, and Parish Councils are gradually coming on board with this.

Community Warden/PCSO – Neither attended; written report received from PCSO:

Crimes of note:

25/10/2022 – School Mews – Youths have caused criminal damage to the wall in the village square. A crime report has been created after it was reported to police by way of the Parish Clerk.

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

30/09/2022 – Grovehurst Road – Male approached 16-year-old female asking for directions, which she gave. He then asked her where could charge his phone. When the female’s mother arrived to pick her up the male quickly walked in the other direction. Local officer was made aware.

01/10/2022 – Dunlin Walk – Reports of a nuisance bike driving around the area. Officer attended but was unable to locate the vehicle.

03/10/2022 – School Lane – reports of a suspicious male outside the school during the evening when Dance Class is on. Officer aware and will attend the location at Key times.

08/10/2022 – Ridham Docks – reports of nuisance vehicles being driven.

09/10/2022 – Sheerstone – Reports of a male on a yellow bike revving the engine and driving up and down the ally.

17/10/2022 – Swallow Avenue – Male attempted to force entry into resident’s house when she went to her door to collect a package left by the post lady. Entry was not gained, and the male ran off. Resident was not hurt but was left shaken. Offender is unknown. There were no other similar reports.

17/10/2022 – Raspberry Hill Lane – reports of 2 males with 2 whippet like dogs poaching in the fields.

18/10/2022 – Sheerstone – Reports of nuisance bikes being driven.

21/10/2022 –Kingfisher Close - Reports of an abandon motorbike. Officer attended and made enquires. Vehicle was not abandoned and road legal. Owner was located.

21/10/2022 – Old Ferry Road – reports of 2 nuisance youths racing up and down the road. No officers available to attend.

22/10/2022 – Culnells Farm – reports of males stealing rainbow trout from the pond. Officers attended but were unable to locate the males.

22/10/2022 – Ridham Docks – reports of vehicles racing. Patrols attended and spoke with drivers. A section 34 was authorised by the duty inspector.

29/10/2022 – Chalkhill Close -Reports of youths climbing on the scaffolding and swinging off of it. Patrols attended and youths made of upon seeing them.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) Review – Payment raised for yellow lines. KCC again looking at the issue in Swallow Avenue. Clerk awaiting addresses from Councillors in order to prepare a consultation letter for circulation. Action: All Councillors/Clerk

Site Entrance Pond Farm – Swale’s Planning Officer is dealing with the issue of lorries driving through the village using Sheppey Way as an entrance to the Pond Farm site.

Parking Issues, Sheerstone – see Item above.

Continue elsewhere ...

IWADE PARISH COUNCIL - MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - Weds 14 December 2022

Present: Cllr. A. Dollimore – Chair, Cllr. B. Whiting, Cllr. S. Tolhurst, Cllr. S. Cheeseman, Cllr. R. Langham, Cllr. S. Lancashire, Cllr. R. Stalley-Moores, Lynda Ives, Acting Clerk/RFO, Adam McKinley, from Vibe, 6 Residents

Prior to the meeting, the Chair welcomed Adam McKinley and a colleague, representatives from Vibe Community Charity - Community led, Youth Inspired, part of the Brogdale CIC Group. Adam is also the Community Warden for Iwade and surrounds, he covers five areas and has tried to work out where they can do youth provision. He is now looking for a spot to set this up and is hoping to do so in Iwade. Provision will take place on Wednesday and will start from the 16 January. It will be like a Youth Club, working outside in the summer and inside during the winter. He will contact the Village Hall to see when it can be used for this facility.

Visitors/Public Time

Visitors – Residents attended to comment on issues with vehicles turning in Swallow Avenue, they were advised that this is being looked at by Kent County Council (KCC). Another resident attended to hear if any progress had been made with youth provision – see above. Others attended to see if there had been any updates on the parking issue in Sheerstone – the Chair advised nothing to date.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Flood Action Group – Sadly Cllr. Whiting has received no responses to his article in the Iwade Observer. He will carry on with this, other Councillors agreed to assist and hopefully residents will come forward in due course. Flooding in the village could come from the stream, surface water and the very real threat that if the Reservoir at the top of School Lane burst the whole of Iwade could be flooded. Action: Cllr. Whiting/Cllrs

Planning

Applications are viewable on: Swale: <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications>; KCC: <https://cloud2.atriumsoft.com/KCCePlanningOPS/searchPageLoad.do>

Finance

Sign-Post Telly Tubby Hill/School Lane – Cllr. Tolhurst has chased FarmSigns for a revised invoice as this payment is still pending. Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Dollimore, agreed to accept the quote from The Acorn Workshop at a cost of £600 to replace the School Lane damaged fingerpost. Action: Cllr. Tolhurst/Clerk

The Queen’s Green Canopy – Memorial Tree Planting for her Majesty – Proposed by Cllr. Tolhurst and seconded by Cllr. Dollimore; agreed the quote of £242.20, plus VAT for the supply of a Prunus avium (Cherry) Tree (root ball 16/18), stake, ties, compost and delivery. Action: Clerk

Pond Management – Cllrs. Tolhurst and Cheeseman met with David Carey, Chairman of the Kent Tree and Pond Partnership on the 18 December, to look at the pond. It was agreed to speak to Swale Borough Council (Clerk to give contact details to Cllr. Tolhurst); speak to the Environment Agency and consider the wildlife impact. Keep on the Agenda. Action: Cllrs. Tolhurst/Cheeseman/Clerk

Damaged Footpaths Sign – Proposed by Cllr. Whiting and seconded by Cllr. Lancashire: agreed the quote of £285 to replace the uprights on this sign. Action: Clerk

Replacement of two Hornbeam Trees - Proposed by Cllr. Lancashire and seconded by Cllr. Tolhurst; agreed the quote of £614.40p for 2 x 16/18 root ball Hornbeam Trees, stakes, ties, compost and Delivery. Also accepted the quote of £365 to plant these and the tree in Item 8.2. Action: Clerk

Request for Grant Parent and Toddler Group – Proposed by Cllr. Cheeseman and seconded by Cllr. Lancashire; agreed the grant of £826.50p. Action: Clerk

Reduction/Cessation of Swale Borough Council Lighting Grant – Clerk advised that Swale Borough Council is cutting the yearly grant from £2620 to £550, which a loss in income. The Borough Council has stated that it will go out to consultation, but no details have been received so far.

Request for Donation – Marie Curie – Proposed by Cllr. Dollimore and seconded by Cllr. Stalley-Moores, agreed the S.137 donation of £50. Action: Clerk

Grounds Maintenance Contract – Clerk has approached KCC to see if money can be saved by them taking back the contract but adding extra cuts (they normally cut 6 times a year, the Parish Council’s present contract is 10+ cuts), however, in the long run the cost exceeds that being paid at present.

Streetlights, Electrical and structural testing – possible handing over to KCC – Proposed by Cllr. Lancashire and seconded by Cllr. Langham agreed the quote of £997 to undertake the testing. The Clerk has approached KCC to see if they would adopt the parish lighting (26 columns), but the cost involved in doing this far exceeds the yearly cost to the Parish Council

Reports from Representatives

Hall – Having issues with condensation behind the new ceiling panels.

KALC – AGM - There were two initial addresses by Roger Gough (RG) Leader of Kent County Council and Matthew Scott (MS), Kent Police Commissioner.

RG advised that he had got together with Hampshire County Council who are a similar size to Kent, and they had written to the Government expressing concerns about resources and the £45m hit to KCC with an overspend of £60m expected to rise to £100m next year. The rise in the Council tax increase cap from 3% to 5% announced in the Autumn Statement would help but there were difficult decisions to be made and they were looking to work with groups such as KALC. There would be severe pressure on services such as Wardens. They were committed to zero carbon by 2030 and were making good progress. He advised that Developer contributions were not sufficient. He also advised that Kent spend more on school transport than most other authorities. MS started by advising that Kent were undergoing a large recruitment programme with an extra 195 Police Officers recruited this year. They were undertaking programmes with youngsters in schools to educate them son the role of the police. County lines have reduced from 80 to 40 so although still too high it is moving in the right direction. He acknowledged problems people were experiencing with reporting incidents to 101 and advised that the high vacancy rate with officers dealing with that service was being looked at with a view to improving the service. There are, however, problems with finance. He advised that they were looking to improve village presence and stated that they would be keeping PCSO’s. However, subsequent newscast have indicated that their numbers are being reduced. He spoke of a programme that they have launched called Victim Voice. There are problems particularly with women and girls reporting crimes. He stressed that if a crime was in progress, it should be reported using 999. He admitted that the online reporting system, particularly for ASB is cumbersome and is being looked at. Apparently, Kent Police are one of the largest users of Crime Stoppers.

November parish Council minutes, continued.

Tracker – Cllrs Tolhurst and S. Waters – Tracker circulated to everyone. Cllr. S. Waters has been unable to ascertain if this can be uploaded to the Microsoft 365 site, for use as a working document by everyone. Clerk to raise this with our ICT firm. Action: Clerk

Lamp Column Painting – No response from KCC, Clerk to chase. Action: Clerk

Planning – applications are viewable on: Swale: <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications>; KCC: <https://cloud2.atriumsoft.com/KCCePlanningOPS/searchPageLoad.do>

Public consultation notification - Pond Farm, Iwade - OFW-039579 CMS:0122092 - https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/22_10_21_Consultation_Notice_Pond_Farm.pdf -agreed no comments.

Finance

Sign-Post Telly Tubby Hill/School Lane – Bring back to next meeting. Action: Cllr. Tolhurst/Clerk

Grounds Maintenance Contract – to include additional areas in revised maps – Agreed to remove from Agenda as Swale Borough Council are short-staffed and have had to appoint a contractor to look at ground maintenance. Action: Clerk

The Queen’s Green Canopy – Memorial Tree Planting for her Majesty – Proposed by Cllr. Langham and seconded by Cllr. Lancashire; agreed the quote of £267 for the supply of a Prunus Betula pendula Hornbeam Tree (root ball 16/18), stake, ties, compost and delivery. Action: Clerk

Pond Management – Cllr. Tolhurst advised David Carey, Chairman of the Kent Tree and Pond Partnership, will visit the site on the 18 December, to look at the pond. Bring back to next meeting. Action: Cllrs. Tolhurst/Cheeseman

Plaque for Beacon – Cllr. Lancashire advised the firm that supplied the basket for the beacon can supply a sign, at a possible cost of £290 plus VAT. Agreed he will go back and look at options for wording on the sign. Action: Cllr. Lancashire

KALC Dynamic Councillor Module – Cllr. Tolhurst – Clerk advised this has now been cancelled.

Damaged Footpaths Sign – Clerk to seek quotes for replacing the uprights. Action: Clerk

Vandalised Marmax Picnic Tabletop – Proposed by Cllr. D. Waters and seconded by Cllr. Lancashire; agreed to accept the quote of £225.84p (includes VAT and delivery). Action: Clerk

Gateway Repairs Sheppey Way – only one quote received Clerk to seek more. Action: Clerk

CCTV – Members attended a meeting with Sean Smith, Manager at Swale CCTV control centre who explained the system and benefits to communities. As a result of this it was agreed Cllr. Tolhurst to ask Mr. Smith to visit Iwade to look at various areas and then give a quote for installation of cameras and the centre providing 24-hour monitoring. Action: Cllr. Tolhurst

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