

Interim Strategic Plan 2023/2024



Our purpose is for our customers to settle at home, live well and realise their potential.



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Interim Strategic Plan 2023/2024 Our plan on a page

Strategic theme	Objective	By March 24 th we will have
Doing the basics brilliantly	We will ensure our homes continue to meet the current regulatory standard, using data and insight; listen to and help our customers navigate the impacts of poverty & the cost-of-living crisis; and create a consistent set of customer standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85%* customer satisfaction with their home, the repairs service & communication with their landlord 100% homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard A systematic approach to help our customer navigate the current environment. Value for money in housing management and maintenance/repair that benchmarks well within our sector profile
Reducing our carbon footprint	Through delivering 10 retrofit tests and collaborating with our customers and partners we will develop an organisational approach to achieve EPC C for our homes by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designed, implemented & evaluated 10 retrofit tests, including our method of working internally and engagement with customers Developed a joint approach to decarbonisation with other social landlords in South Yorkshire to ensure value for money at the next stage
New homes and services	We will strengthen the financial performance of our business through increasing the number of homes we manage and the profitability of our LiveWell services and commercial subsidiary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased turnover of £10m and surplus of £500k pa from new business in the period 2019-24 New homes and services that meet our viability/VFM targets Planning permission for 143 affordable homes & handover/be in contract to acquire 84 new affordable homes
Business Resilience	We will improve our financial position through better financial & risk management and use of data & technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver our budget & Business Plan targets Secure £20m of development finance Value for money from our investment in data, IT & business change
Governance	We will return to our G1 governance rating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% actions in our Governance Improvement Plan completed
People	We will attract, develop & retain people to deliver on our Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement our revised approach to hybrid working Implement our new wellbeing offer Value for money/return on investment of >4 from our learning & development programme <23% employee turnover

Introduction

Just as we thought it was safe to lift up our heads and plan for a post-Covid world, our customers, and South Yorkshire Housing Association (SYHA) as an organisation, have been hit by a perfect storm. Rampant inflation, a recession, a war and humanitarian crisis in Europe, a winter of strikes, a stretched NHS and a cost-of-living crisis are taking their toll on so many of us, our family and our friends. Our landlord services team reports that front-line staff are now having to address rent arrears issues with many households who have never been behind before. Too many of our customers are having to choose between heating and eating. Our maintenance teams are working hard to balance the competing priorities of routine stock investment with improving fire safety, driving through our retrofit/net zero carbon ambitions and ensuring we maintain an effective response to dampness, mould and condensation whilst accommodating significant price rises.

All this is diverting resources away from other strategic priorities such as tackling the climate crisis and building new homes. We know we are not alone. We hear consistently from our friends in the PlaceShapers group of housing associations that they are finding it more difficult than ever to provide high quality services, establish priorities and manage risks effectively. This is the context against which this Strategic Plan has been developed.

What has always stood us in good stead, as we enter the next 50 years of SYHA's life, is our clarity of values and purpose. We say "with SYHA you can settle at home, live well and realise your potential." Half a century of doing just this, combining innovation with a determination to do the basics brilliantly, has built a legacy and a culture that is distinctively SYHA's. This gives us a platform and a confidence to know we will continue to do the next right thing for all our customers, and that SYHA will thrive and be here for the long term.

An interim plan

2023 is a big year for South Yorkshire Housing Association: we say goodbye to Tony Stacey, our Chief Executive of 27 years, who will retire; and we are delighted to welcome Larry Gold as our new Chief Executive from March.

Our current Strategic Plan expires in March 2023. Larry will, during his first year, develop SYHA's new strategic direction and will encapsulate this in a new Strategic Plan. We were therefore left with two choices: extend the current plan by a year or develop an interim plan.

We chose the latter for a number of reasons.

Firstly, we have made really good progress in some areas of our current plan, with many actions either complete or business as usual.

Secondly, our world has been transformed over the last three years – a global pandemic, war in Europe, economic turmoil – all of which has had a direct impact on the experience of our customers and on the level of resource we have to deliver on our strategic objectives. It felt important to recognise that change and re-focus.

And thirdly, the current plan is focused primarily on business transformation rather than the needs of our customers and stakeholders. Given the challenging environment we all face, a different set of priorities felt right.

Because a new plan will be developed during 2023, we have not carried out direct engagement with customers and our workforce on this interim plan. We have, however, drawn from existing customer and workforce insight and data and the ideas and priorities of our Board of Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) in determining the six themes in this plan.

Risk

The management of risk is an essential part of managing our business and delivering our strategy. We have a system of risk management embedded within all levels of the organisation and covering the spectrum of its activities. We will identify and manage material strategic risks.

Risk can be defined as “uncertain future events that could influence the achievement of strategic, operational and financial objectives”. When examining risk, we consider our risk appetite (the types and levels of risk that are considered appropriate) and our risk response (to accept, treat, transfer or eliminate risk).

Responsibility for risk management lies with the Board. Day-to-day management of risk is delegated to the Chief Executive and Executive Directors, with the lead on this being provided by the Finance Director.

The Audit and Assurance Committee has a role in assuring that best practice is achieved and maintained, and that any emerging or changing risks or concerns are escalated for the Board's attention.

We embed management of risk in our planning, management, and reporting (examples being performance indicators, treasury and development).

The key elements of our work are:

- Setting our Risk Appetite, ensuring that board decisions are made in line with agreed appetite and reviewing this appetite in relation to the operating context of SYHA
- Maintaining a Strategic Risk and Assurance Register
- Maintaining Departmental Risk Registers
- Maintaining an Assets and Liabilities Register
- Risk assessment for material new activity or in response to material changes arising in the context of existing activity
- Deep Dive Exercises

Our six themes

Our new Strategic Plan sets out six themes or areas of focus for the next year that will help us deliver on our purpose. We will pivot our resources – our financial capacity, our homes, our services and our people – to deliver on these themes. Our purpose is: “with South Yorkshire Housing Association you can settle at home, live well and realise your potential. We want your experience with us to be a joy. We plan to be here for the long-term and we want everything we do to be sustainable”. This long-term commitment to our customers and our region drives our investment decisions.

The six themes are:



Three of the themes deliver impact for our customers, our business, our stakeholders and the planet.

Three of the themes are enablers so we can be in best shape to deliver for the people and places we serve.

United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals share a vision of how we can improve people’s lives, create a more equal world, and protect the environment. We’ve shown how our strategic themes help to meet the 17 goals.



Theme 1

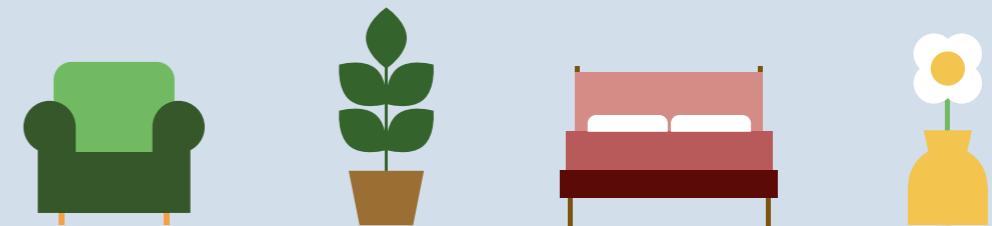
Doing the basics brilliantly

Our customers and their homes are at the heart of what we do; it's why we are here. In a challenging external environment it is even more critical that we continue to deliver on our purpose: to ensure our customers can access, and settle in, homes that are affordable, safe and well-maintained; to support our customers to access the information and services they need to navigate the current economic crisis and to continue to provide support on homelessness, mental health and finding/staying in work.



<p>Action</p> <p>We will take a data-driven approach, which will include both management information and insight from our customers, to make targeted and proactive investment to ensure that our existing homes continue to be homes that our customers can be proud of and that meet the current regulatory standard.</p> <p>Owner</p> <p>Housing Services LiveWell Property Services</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve?</p> <p>85%* of customers report high levels of satisfaction with their existing home & the repairs service.</p> <p>100% of SYHA homes meet the Decent Homes Standard</p> <p>100% of customers are satisfied with their new home.</p> <p>Deliver VFM in housing management & maintenance/repair costs that benchmarks well within our sector profile.</p>	<p>How measured?</p> <p>Through the Tenant Satisfaction Survey perception measures.</p> <p>Through the data we submit in our Statistical Data Return on Decent Homes</p> <p>Lead</p> <p>Customer Connect</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>We will use the resources, tools and networks at our disposal to do all we can to help our customers navigate the impacts of poverty and the current cost of living crisis. This includes ensuring that customers get the breadth of the SYHA offer in a systematic way.</p> <p>Owner</p> <p>Housing Services LiveWell</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve?</p> <p>95% of rents meet our criteria for affordability and we maintain an income- to-rent ratio of 33%</p> <p>We track the number of customers within our arrears management process</p> <p>We track the number of internal referrals to our Employment Support Services or Green Doctors</p> <p>15% of Work & Wellbeing customers referred to Citizens Advice for economic wellbeing support, with an annual income gain of £40,000.e.</p> <p>Improvements in our least energy-efficient homes</p>	<p>How measured?</p> <p>Annual Review of Lettings</p> <p>CX rent accounting data</p> <p>Rent Sense monitoring documentation of arrears cases</p> <p>Referral data</p> <p>LW specific service data</p> <p>Lead</p> <p>Housing Services LiveWell</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>We will bring together all the outcomes and outputs of our work on developing our customer service standards to create one singular set of customer standards that can be consistently applied across the business as 'the SYHA way' and that has an implementation plan, and a plan for how this data should be habitually used by the wider business. We will align this with the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.</p> <p>Owner</p> <p>Head of Customer Connect</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve?</p> <p>Building on the work of our Customer Promises we will consolidate the existing different strands of Customer Standards and Promises into one coherent set of Standards that can be consistently applied in all areas of our work and built into operational practice and culture.</p> <p>85%* of customers report high levels of satisfaction with communication with their landlord.</p>	<p>How measured?</p> <p>Through the Tenant Satisfaction Survey perception measures.</p> <p>Through the data we submit in our Statistical Data Return on Decent Homes</p> <p>Lead</p> <p>Head of Customer Connect The Leadership Team</p>

*Subject to formal agreement of the Annual Targets & Measures by the SYHA Board of Management



Theme 2

Reducing our carbon footprint

Housing is a big part of the climate change problem representing 25% of UK carbon emissions. As guardian of thousands of homes and a significant business we can and should contribute to meeting the UK's 2050 zero carbon target. We have government targets to meet e.g. to ensure all our homes are at least EPC C by 2030. We want to reduce energy costs for our customers. And we want to reduce the use of carbon in our business.



<p>Action SYHA's carbon footprint routinely reported to Board and decarbonisation targets agreed.</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Carbon emissions reduced in line with agreed targets.</p>	<p>How measured? Portfolio corporate energy & fuel consumption</p> <p>Lead Customer Connect</p>
<p>Action Continue to improve our property data by a) improving our EPC data including completing new EPC assessments whenever changes to a building occur that impact on energy performance and uploading the data to Cx and Portfolio and b) completing current EPCs and Retrofit Assessments for <C properties in priority neighbourhood to be retrofitted in 2023-25</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development Property Services Data & IT</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? a) % data upload versus required upload b) % of properties for which assessment is complete.</p>	<p>How measured? Cx, our asset management system SAP/EPC data on energy efficiency improvements.</p> <p>Lead Property Services Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Undertake 10 retrofit pilots to validate desktop modelling of the measures and costs of achieving EPC C in a cost effective way and refine our organisational set up and approach for delivering retrofit at scale.</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? 10 of our less than EPC C portfolio achieves EPC C via the retrofit tests</p> <p>Learning from tests informs resourcing & retrofit and organisational approach to delivery of future programme</p>	<p>How measured? Monitoring & evaluation of test projects</p> <p>Lead Property Services Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Collaborate with and learn from others to achieve the most cost effective plan, and to optimise the economic benefits of, a cross-landlord insulation / decarbonisation programme for people and businesses in South Yorkshire</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development South Yorkshire Housing Partnership – Road to net zero group</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Identify scope to collaborate with others in our priority neighbourhoods to achieve economies of scale & VFM</p> <p>Work collaboratively across South Yorkshire on procurement & supply chain including skills development</p>	<p>How measured? Reports from Road to net zero group</p> <p>Lead Property Services Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Develop and test, through the retrofit projects, methods for engaging our customers in this agenda and implement phase 1 of our employee engagement plan.</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development Marketing & Communications</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? We develop an approach to customer engagement that we can use in our future retrofit programme</p> <p>We raise awareness & understanding amongst our employees</p>	<p>How measured? Monitoring & evaluation of test projects</p> <p>Lead Property Services Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Routinely track and analyse and report our data on energy & fuel use in our business operations to achieve cost savings and contribute to decarbonising our business. Change behaviours to reduce energy use in our corporate workspace (Rockingham Street and Depot).</p> <p>Owner Workspaces Property Services People Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Systems & processes in place to enable routine reporting on fuel & energy use in our corporate workspace, vans and grey fleet</p> <p>10% reduction in energy usage and cost for corporate workspace</p>	<p>How measured? Monarch, our energy usage portal data Van fuel usage Staff mileage</p> <p>Lead Workspaces</p>

Theme 3

New homes and services

We are here for the long term. We need to rationalise and grow our portfolio of homes and services so that we can deliver on our purpose and support more people to meet the demand in Sheffield City Region; and so that our business evolves and remains relevant. Our growth will be sustainable.



<p>Action New homes & services contribute to improved financial performance</p> <p>Owner Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? £10m turnover & £500k surplus from new business in period 2019- 24 New homes & services meet our viability/VFM targets</p>	<p>How measured? Annual Growth Plan report PAMWIN development appraisals LiveWell contract bids</p> <p>Lead Business Development & LiveWell Directors</p>
<p>Action Secure planning permission, land purchase and Brownfield Housing grant funding (where applicable) on the Phase 1 sites in our Development Plan</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Planning permission secured for 143 homes £1.3m BHF grant secured</p>	<p>How measured? Quarterly Development report</p> <p>Lead Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Take handover of committed s106/other acquisitions & enter into contract on pipeline s106/other acquisitions</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? 27 homes brought into management A further 57 s106 homes in contract</p>	<p>How measured? Quarterly Development report</p> <p>Lead Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Determine our target for housing growth/land acquisition in the period up to 2030</p> <p>Owner Board Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Determine our target for housing growth/land acquisition in the period up to 2030</p>	<p>How measured? Business Plan</p> <p>Lead Finance Director</p>
<p>Action Update our strategy around disposal and use of our existing homes, staying open to using existing resources differently for new services</p> <p>Owner Board Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Net increase in number of homes in management</p>	<p>How measured? Single Capital Plan</p> <p>Lead Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Determine the future scale & scope of LiveWell portfolio, based on our purpose and an analysis of financial performance, balancing opportunity with resources</p> <p>Owner Board Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? £5m of LiveWell contracts retained/ won 65% tender strike rate maintained</p>	<p>How measured? Business Plan Annual review of LiveWell business development LiveWell Quarterly report</p> <p>Lead Directors of Care, Health & Wellbeing</p>
<p>Action Ensure SYHA Enterprises remains profitable</p> <p>Owner Enterprise Team SYHAE Board</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? SYHAE achieves its cash surplus (7% of investment)</p>	<p>How measured? SYHAE Quarterly report</p> <p>Lead Business Development Director</p>

Theme 4 Business resilience

We want to be here for the next 50 years. We need to make a surplus to meet our lender covenants and so that we can reinvest in new homes and services: profit to fulfil our purpose. This will require a rigorous approach to business planning and financial management to manage the impact of a challenging external environment. Digital services for our customers, effective use of data and technology and smarter business processes will both improve our offer to customers and bring efficiencies and cost savings to our business.



<p>Action Improve our understanding of the financial performance of different parts of our business.</p> <p>Owner Directors' Team Finance</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Operating margin of 12.8% of in line with revised November 2022 business plan</p>	<p>How measured? Budget and quarterly forecasts</p> <p>Lead Chief Executive Finance Director</p>
<p>Action Ensure that SYHA generates sufficient cash to meet its planned commitments.</p> <p>Owner Finance</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Gross cash flow from operating activities £10.3m in line with Business plan Cashflow funding in place for 18 months.</p>	<p>How measured? Budget and quarterly forecasts</p> <p>Lead Chief Executive Finance Director</p>
<p>Action Seek and obtain funding for the revised Development Plan</p> <p>Owner Asset Strategy & Development</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Funding in place to support agreed plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8m in 2025/26 for authorised schemes • £12m for pipeline schemes </p>	<p>How measured? Quarterly Treasury report</p> <p>Lead Finance Director</p>
<p>Action Deliver the financial improvements included in the Business Plan</p> <p>Owner Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? £1.3m of financial improvements achieved by April 2024</p> <p>Surplus generated from property sales £3.2m in line with budget</p>	<p>How measured? Monthly Action Plan report to Board Budget & Quarterly performance report</p> <p>Lead Directors' Team Asset Strategy & Development</p>
<p>Action Embed the new Risk & Assurance framework</p> <p>Owner Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Board oversight & management of material risks per timetable. No material risks arise which have not been identified in the Risk and Assurance register</p>	<p>How measured? Quarterly report to board</p> <p>Lead Directors' Team</p>
<p>Action Establish and embed an effective Information Security Management System to ensure Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability of our data and systems</p> <p>Owner Information Security Group</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Our critical IT systems are available 99% of the time internal & external</p> <p>0 reportable data breaches to the ICO</p> <p>0 security incidents requiring incident response</p>	<p>How measured? Data reports from IT monitoring system (PRTG) Data from GDPR tracking system (BPA) Data from NCC Group CIRT service</p> <p>Lead IT</p>
<p>Action Operationalise the delivery of our Digital First strategy in order to deliver financial & service improvements</p> <p>Owner Customer Connect Landlord Services IT, Data & Business Change</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? 80% customer transactions delivered online</p>	<p>How measured? Data from our IT systems (VerseOne customer portal, In Contact phone system, Cx)</p> <p>Lead Customer Connect IT, Data & Business Change</p>
<p>Action Continue to develop our data, digital systems and business processes to generate value for money improvements and support delivery of core plans</p> <p>Owner IT, Data & Business Change</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Deliver the IT CAPEX and annual IT plan</p> <p>Secure VFM from our investment in data, IT & business change</p>	<p>How measured? Milestone reports via Data Digital and Agile</p> <p>Lead IT & Business Change</p>

Theme 5 Governance

Excellent governance matters: it ensures we meet the expectations of our customers, deliver our services in line with regulatory requirements and can borrow money to invest in new homes and services. We have never had a complaint upheld by the Ombudsman and we have a strong track record in governance, having been rated G1 by the Regulator of Social Housing until 2022, when we were re-graded to G2 (a lower but compliant grade). We want to retain our reputation by returning to a G1 rating as soon as possible.



<p>Action Manage the induction of the new Chief Executive and selection/induction of a new Chair to ensure a smooth transition</p> <p>Owner Board Chief Executive Directors' Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Minimal disruption to our business</p> <p>Recruitment of an excellent Chair by Sept 23</p>	<p>How measured? Quarterly Performance report Nominations Committee report</p> <p>Lead Directors' Team</p>
<p>Action Deliver our Governance Improvement Plan</p> <p>Owner Board Chief Executive</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? NEDs drive the new Strategic Plan & agree system to evidence and report progress.</p> <p>Align Strategic Plan with Business Plan and budget.</p> <p>Complete an external review of Board effectiveness & composition.</p> <p>Develop skills matrix to inform future NED recruitment, evaluation, development and succession planning</p>	<p>How measured? Monthly report to Board G1 rating secured from RoSH</p> <p>Lead Chief Executive</p>
<p>Action Embed Tenant Satisfaction Measures as a new regulatory requirement</p> <p>Owner Customer Connect</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Complete our TSM survey in accordance with the regulatory standard</p>	<p>How measured? Viewpoint customer survey results reported to Board</p> <p>Lead Customer Connect</p>



Theme 6 People

The quality of our employees is the biggest driver of the quality of everything we do. We need to attract, engage and retain great people to deliver impact for our customers, to realise our plans and to ensure our long-term viability. We need to embed and build on the gains from our Race Action Plan: a diverse workforce is a better workforce. And we need to support our people during a period of change through excellent workforce planning, a sharp focus on the health and wellbeing of our employees, bolstering our employment offer and brilliant communications.



<p>Action Renew SYHA's culture post pandemic and establish a new approach to measuring engagement</p> <p>Owner People Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? We will establish a baseline for employee engagement through a new assessment measure</p>	<p>How measured? New engagement survey Board annual review of People</p> <p>Lead People Team</p>
<p>Action We will continue to focus on the, retention recruitment and development of our workforce in a challenging labour market. We will further embed the improvements to our recruitment processes. We will deliver high quality learning and development which have a material impact on our ability to deliver on our organisational strategy and purpose</p> <p>Owner People Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Maintain >4 satisfaction on the Kirk Patrick assessment of learning and development quality (VFM measure). Achieve a minimum of 90% compliance on compulsory H&S training & 95% compliance on corporate training We will continue to improve our approach to measuring Return on Investment/VFM in learning and development</p>	<p>How measured? Unit 4 data Kirk Patrick assessment on all courses Keep Learning data Annual review of learning and development RoSH</p> <p>Lead People Team</p>
<p>Action Deliver the following priorities from our organisational People Plan: • Continue to make progress with our reward and recognition offer. • Respond to the findings of our Wellbeing co-design work • Implement the next phase of our hybrid working plan</p> <p>Owner Directors' Team People Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Improved approach to performance management introduced to all managers. Ongoing improvement on the number of our roles which are at market median Implement our new Wellbeing offer <23% long/short term sickness absence. The new approach to hybrid working is designed, agreed and implemented</p>	<p>How measured? Unit 4 data Annual People report to Board</p> <p>Lead People Team</p>
<p>Action Embed the gains from our Race Action Plan. Upskill our managers to make best use of our suite of People data and insight to track diversity in their services. Implement a learning programme for managers & leaders to support delivery of the Race Action Plan.</p> <p>Owner Diversity and Belonging Steering Group People Team</p>	<p>What are we trying to achieve? Increase to 12% the number of racially & ethnically diverse people in our organisation employees Increase in the number of racially & ethnically diverse colleagues on leadership & development programmes 100% of interview panels for supervisory and management roles have an Independent Panel member</p>	<p>How measured? Unit 4 data Board Annual Review of Equality and Diversity Annual review of the Race Action Plan</p> <p>Lead People Team Race & Diversity Lead</p>





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