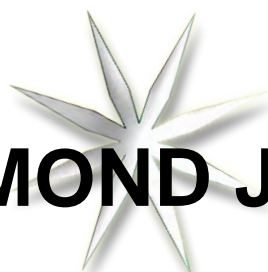


# BROMLEY MENCAP

# BULLETIN



March/April 2011



## OUR 60TH DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR!










Left: Leslie Marks, Chair of Bromley Mencap 1969-1974



Right: Peter Prentice, current Chair of Bromley Mencap since 2008

April 2011 marks the start of our 60<sup>th</sup> Diamond Jubilee Year. A working group of volunteers and staff have got together to mark this significant year in our history. A range of events and activities are being planned for the next 12 months.

These include:

-  **2<sup>nd</sup> April** – Concert by The Sticklebacks at The HG Wells Centre
-  **5<sup>th</sup> June** - A Summer Garden Party for Volunteers
-  **10<sup>th</sup> July** - Drinks reception and showing of Bromley Mencap film
-  **Autumn** - Our Awards Ceremony
-  **2<sup>nd</sup> December** - A Christmas Concert by the Salvation Army
-  **Christmas** - A Carol Service
-  **Spring 2012** - A service of thanksgiving at St Mark's Church

We are also working on a 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Year Book, a tree planting ceremony, and a number of other ideas. More details will be available in future Bulletins and on our website.

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- Census 2011 p15
- SeeAbility's eye2eye campaign p12
- Leslie Marks talks to Bulletin p18



## **Bromley Mencap needs YOU to be a Super Hero**

We have 15 places in the Super Hero 5k (3 miles) Run that is taking place in Regents Park on Sunday 15 May (*please note the change of date from last edition of Bulletin*) and we need your support.

It would be great if you could take part in this event to help us celebrate our Diamond Jubilee year!

Costumes will be provided - however you do not have to wear them! You don't need to be a marathon runner to take part. As long as you are over 8 years old and can walk or jog for 3 miles you can join the team. Over 1,500 people from charities both large and small are already registered. Why not join them?

I will be *walking* and would welcome company. All we ask is that you pay the entry fee of £20 and agree to raise a minimum of £100 in sponsorship.

It's great fun and we have a picnic in the park after the event. If you need more information or would like to take part please let me know.

**Susanne Dowswell, telephone: 020 8466 0790**





Hello Everyone!

There is huge excitement at Bromley Mencap about this, our Diamond Jubilee year. As well as reading what is planned and how to get involved, it gives me great pleasure to include in this issue of Bulletin an interview with Leslie Marks, who was our Chair for five years from 1969 (page 18). It is shocking to realise that people with learning disabilities were so neglected during our own lifetime, but learning how the leadership of people like Leslie helped bring about positive changes is, at the same time, inspiring.

Of course there is still a long way to go, particularly with set-backs such as spending cuts, so see on page 8 how the campaigning keeps on.

Filling in a Census form can be quite daunting to many, and even more so for those with a disability. Read about where you can get help with the Census on page 15.

Jackie Ralph  
Editor  
Jackie@stellamarketing.co.uk



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# **BROMLEY MENCAP**

Registered Charity Number 800685

**60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations**  
**present**



**an evening of live entertainment with**  
**music from the 50s and 60s**  
**with**

# **THE STICKLEBACKS**



**Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011**

**The HG Wells Centre**

(behind Waitrose, Bromley South)  
St Mark's Road, Bromley BR2 9HG

**Doors open 19:00 hrs**

**Admission: £5 adults, £3 children/students**

Exciting live music - Surf, Blues and Rock 'n Roll  
Sensational jokes  
A "Twist" contest  
Raffle in interval

## EDDIE LYNCH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, REPORTS ON A SHORT TERM CAMPAIGNING WIN, BROMLEY MENCAP'S DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR AND THE NATIONAL CENSUS



### Key Points

- Bromley Mencap is 60 years old. Events are being organised to mark our anniversary
- We have campaigned against government cuts
- The Bromley Learning Disability Forum has come to an end
- Census forms will be sent to every household to complete



Happy Easter to all our members!

As Bromley Mencap enters a new financial year we wait to see the impact of national and local spending cuts in Bromley. As you will read on page 8 we have been busy responding to national and local consultations. It is reassuring that the Government has at least stalled on making a decision on scrapping the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance. This was considered to be one cut too many for the most vulnerable people in society.

### ***Learning Disability Forum closes***

Locally the Bromley Learning Disability Forum has decided to close down. Although the Forum was very active and productive in the early years of its formation, other groups have grown around the Forum in recent times and some of the work was being duplicated. The

role and future of the Forum has been under discussion for the last few years. Membership had decreased and, despite continued efforts, the Forum was unable to recruit a new Chairman. A new Chairman was essential if the group was going to continue. Forum members are being offered the opportunity of joining the Bromley LINK Learning Disability Task Group. In the absence of the Forum Bromley Mencap will continue to have a lead campaigning and representative role around learning disability in the borough.

### ***Our Diamond Jubilee year***

We have also been busy organising events and activities to mark our 60<sup>th</sup> Diamond Jubilee Year. As you can see from the front page a series of celebratory events is being organised for the year ahead and more details will be available once the dates and arrangements are confirmed.

To mark our 60<sup>th</sup> year and our recent merger with Bromley Scope we will also be launching a revamped website. The new website will be more interactive and enable us to have news items and details of events and activities available on a more regular basis.



### **Census**

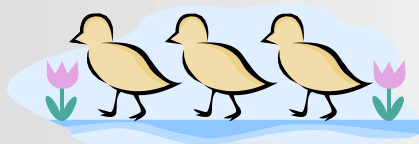
It has been 10 years since the last Census was carried out. Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March is Census Day. Every household should receive a census form to complete in March. This time there is a commitment to make the form more accessible and user friendly. We know, however, that some of our disabled members and carers will have difficulty completing the form. We are offering support and running a series of workshops through Brokerage, the Older Carers Lunch Club, our Mutual Carers Support Group and our Job

Clubs. More details on the Census appear on page 15. If you require any help to complete the form please contact the office on 020 8466 0790.

### ***Help us mark our Jubilee year***

Finally if you currently receive a service from us or have benefited from our support over the years please do consider helping us to mark our Diamond Jubilee Year. You could hold a cake and coffee morning, run/walk in the 5k event in May (page 2) or even host a garden party. We have nearly 1,500 members and we would welcome your involvement not only to mark our anniversary but also to help raise awareness of the valuable work we do.

It's also a good opportunity to help us raise much needed funds for our services. The next few years are going to be very challenging financially. Please call the office on 020 8466 0790 to talk through any ideas or suggestions – we would love to hear from you!



### **Bulletin welcomes new members:**

Mr Mark Page  
Kim & Michelle Johnson



# Family Services April Events



**1st April**

**Carer's Lunch** (+60 years)  
(By Invitation only)  
St Augustine's Parish Church  
Southborough Lane  
Bromley, Kent  
BR2 8AT

**20th April**

**Easter Workshop**  
(Ages 14 to 30 years)  
Details have yet to be finalised,  
flyers will be posted soon



**27th April**

**Adult Keep Fit Classes start**  
(Over 18 years of age)  
Bromley Town Church  
Ethelbert Road  
Bromley  
BR1 1JA  
We hope to be able to run these classes but details have yet to be finalised. Flyers and registration forms will be posted in due course.

For further information telephone Lynda on 020 8466 0790

***Flyers and booking forms for these events will follow***

# CAMPAIGNS, CUTS AND CONSULTATIONS

Report by Malcolm Wood, Bromley Mencap

## Campaigns Plan

Bromley Mencap has recently developed a new Campaigns Plan. The Plan includes issues raised by our members ranging from environmental access, taxi cards, the closure of Bassetts and the wider welfare to work agenda.

The past few months have been busy with the Coalition Government proposing changes to welfare benefits affecting disabled people, the Council proposing changes to its charging policy for the services it provides and reviewing special educational needs transport.

All of these issues are being debated nationally and locally.

It is very useful for us to have your stories, so that we can give examples of how changes affect you and your family – both positive and negative.



## Information by email



This year we have begun sending information to members electronically who have given us their email addresses. We have had some positive feedback from those who have received information, particularly our new members who joined us from Bromley Scope. If you would like to receive information via email and be added to our growing list, just let us know and we will add your details.

## One short term win

One short term win we have been delighted to hear about is the Coalition Government's announcement that they will hold off making a decision on scrapping the Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance. This is something we have campaigned on and it shows that campaigning really can help to influence key policy decisions.



## **A few current national campaigns:**

- \* Scope is urging disabled people and their families to make appointments to see their local MPs and make sure they get behind the campaign to save the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance  
**[www.scope.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.scope.org.uk/campaigns)**
- \* Stage and Screen Campaign. Help Scope shine a spotlight on access issues in the entertainment industry via **[www.scope.org/stage](http://www.scope.org/stage)**
- \* For learning disability week in June, when Mencap will launch a 3 year campaign against hate crime, they want to talk to people who have experienced hate crime. Details are on the Mencap website and people can email their details to **[casestudies@mencap.org.uk](mailto:casestudies@mencap.org.uk)**

## **Mystery Shoppers Wanted**

Bromley Police want to recruit people with disabilities to act as “mystery shoppers”. This is part of their plans to test and make sure that they are accessible to people with disabilities. You will be asked to either telephone, email, station and record how you felt you were treated.

If you are interested in becoming a mystery shopper please call Bromley Mencap on 020 8466 0790 or email: [Malcolm.wood@bromleymencap.org](mailto:Malcolm.wood@bromleymencap.org)

We will then pass your details onto Bromley Police.



### **Key Points:**

- Bromley Mencap has got a new Campaigns Plan
- It is very useful for us to have your stories, both positive and negative
- You can now receive our campaign information by email
- The Coalition Government have delayed making a decision about the Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance
- Bromley Police want to recruit people with learning disabilities to act as mystery shoppers.

## MEET DEBBIE ELLIS-KEELER, BROMLEY MENCAP'S NEW FINANCE ASSISTANT.

Hello, my name is Debbie Ellis-Keeler and I am very pleased to have joined Bromley Mencap working as a Finance Assistant supporting Susan Fisher, Bromley Mencap's Finance Officer.

I have worked in various Finance and Tax roles over the years including working for a bank and recently as a bookkeeper and administrator of a small trade association. I live in Shortlands and enjoy keeping fit and cookery.

I have been made to feel very welcome and am delighted to be part of the team at Bromley Mencap.



## BIRTHDAYS

The Bromley Mencap Family Services committee have decided that it is no longer necessary or appropriate to display each member's birthday in each issue of Bulletin.

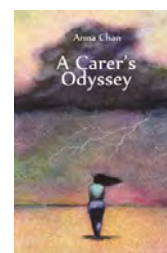
Some parents have raised their concern about the possible negative effect of their child's name and birthdates being displayed. Also, it was felt that the Birthday page could more usefully be used for more Bromley Mencap news, issues and information.

However, Bromley Mencap have assured Bulletin that individual birthday cards will still be sent out.



## A CARER'S ODYSSEY

Member Anna Chan has written a book - A Carer's Odyssey, about caring for her daughter who has Rett's Syndrome. Full details of the book, and where you can get it are on [www.acarersodyssey.com](http://www.acarersodyssey.com)



# Community Fundraising Events

## Bromley Mencap needs YOU to be a Super Hero

This is a fun way of supporting the work of Bromley Mencap and helping to raise the funds that are urgently needed to ensure that the current levels of support can be maintained. More details on page 2.

## London Marathon

We are very fortunate to have 2 runners in this year's Virgin London Marathon. Michael Horan whose cousin and family are currently benefiting from our services and Steven Benjamin who is the nephew of our very own book man Bob Luckhurst are both running for us.

If you would like to sponsor their efforts please go to [www.virginmoneygiving.com](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com) and type in their names.

We wish them good luck!



## Diamond Jubilee Fundraising Events

The first event of the Diamond Jubilee year will be the music evening at the H G Wells Centre, Bromley, presented by the Sticklebacks, More details on page 4.

If you would like to organise an event to help celebrate this very significant milestone in our history please contact me on the number below and I will be happy to help.

**Contact: Susanne Dowswell,  
Corporate and Community Fundraiser  
Email [susanne.dowswell@bromleymencap.org](mailto:susanne.dowswell@bromleymencap.org)  
Tel 020 8466 0790**

# EYE CARE AND VISION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

## The facts

- 1 in 3 people with a learning disability has a sight difficulty
- people with learning disabilities may not know they have a sight difficulty and they may not be able to tell others
- unidentified sight difficulties can seriously undermine quality of life and lead to avoidable sight loss and increased dependency
- people with learning disabilities are most likely to have sight difficulties and least likely to get the right help and support with eye care



*SeeAbility's eye 2 eye Campaign is working to help people with learning disabilities to look after their sight. They provide information and support to people with a learning disability, their family carers, health and social care staff and eye care professionals through their Look Up website - [www.lookupinfo.org](http://www.lookupinfo.org)*



The Look Up website has a specific section for Carers and Supporters. Some of Look Up's features include -

- Easy Read factsheets about eye care for people with Learning Disabilities.
- Forms to help people get the most from an eye test.
- A database to help people find an optometrist in their area.
- The "You and Eye" film about a person's eye test.
- Functional Vision Assessment tool to find out more about how much someone can see.



If you can't access the website please call Gill Eldridge on 020 8466 0790 who will be able to print off the information sheets and send them out to you.

## Key Points;

- Many people with learning disabilities have a sight difficulty
- The Look Up website provides information to people with a learning disability, their carers, professionals and support groups about eye care
- **[www.lookupinfo.org](http://www.lookupinfo.org)**

## Bromley Mencap's Jobmatch search for new directions



Our Jobmatch service has worked creatively over the years to increase the employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities and those on the autistic spectrum. There are currently 146 Jobmatch candidates sustaining employment and many were helped through our different recruitment methods with local employers such as working interviews or our job carving scheme. Our Micro Enterprise scheme has also helped 3 people to set up their own business, and we are currently working through a feasibility period with a 4<sup>th</sup> person who wants to develop a card making business.

The recession, and recent spending review by central government, has presented many challenges to our Jobmatch service. We will, however, continue to work creatively to provide new services to our members, and on this occasion would like to include input from some of our membership.

### ***Personalisation and Social Enterprise***

I am restarting our Employment Services Sub-Committee, which will meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss and develop new employment initiatives. We are particularly interested in the personalisation agenda, and how we can provide services to those with personal budgets. We also want to look at possible social enterprise initiatives that will complement other services in the borough.

### ***Employment Services Sub-Committee***

I am therefore looking for new members for the Employment Services Sub-Committee who can offer expertise in the above areas and business experience.

If you would like further information about the work of the Employment Services Sub-Committee, please contact me on **020 8466 0791** or email [fran.dillnutt@bromleymencap.org](mailto:fran.dillnutt@bromleymencap.org)



#### Key Points:

- Jobmatch has created job opportunities through innovative recruitment methods
- The Employment Services Sub-Committee is re-convening to discuss and help implement new employment initiatives
- We are looking for new members with experience in social enterprise and business



You can raise funds for Bromley Mencap by saving paperback books, mobiles, printer cartridges and unwanted gifts and donating them. Contact Susanne, details below

*Paperback books*

*Old mobile phones*

**Susanne Dowswell,**  
Corporate and  
Community  
Fundraiser  
Email  
[susanne.dowswell@bromleymencap.org](mailto:susanne.dowswell@bromleymencap.org)

*Used printer cartridges*

*Unwanted gifts*

Tel: 020 8466 0790



## Going out this weekend?

At this time of year, people all across Britain seek to escape from the dark nights and arctic weather by heading to the theatre and cinema. But worryingly, thousands of disabled people could be left out in the cold this winter because of ongoing access problems.

***Back Scope's stage and screen campaign!***

[www.scope.org.uk/stage](http://www.scope.org.uk/stage)  
020 7619 2370



# Census 2011

**In March this year 25 million households will receive a Census form by post to complete which they can return by post or complete online.**

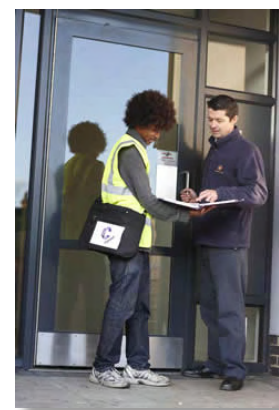
- Census day is **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March**. Forms are being delivered by Royal Mail from 4<sup>th</sup> March to 25<sup>th</sup> March for people to complete
- You can complete the form online using the unique reference number on the front of the form. The website address is **[www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)**
- A telephone helpline **0300 0201 101** will be available from Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March. It is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday
- People with disabilities will be able to gain assistance by either using the helpline or by going to **<http://2011.census.gov.uk/The-accessible-census>**
- If English is not your first language then a translation booklet can be ordered by using the helpline number. There are 56 different language booklets available, but the form has to be completed in English



- Carers and Care staff can assist any person provided the person asks for help first. This has to be pointed out because the legislation on Census is quite specific that information provided by a person is confidential
- Census collectors will only attend addresses from 6<sup>th</sup> April onwards when a form has not been returned.

Should a person need assistance to complete a form an appointment can be made for a collector to attend. All collectors carry photographic identification

Should you have any enquiries about the Census in Bromley please contact the Bromley Census area manager Keith Gausden on Tel 07801 331 473 or e-mail [H142@census.gov.uk](mailto:H142@census.gov.uk)



## Key Points:

- Carers can help a person to complete the form if the person asks for help first
- A telephone helpline is available: 0300 0201 101
- Help is available to disabled people online: <http://2011.census.gov.uk/The-accessible-census>
- Don't forget Bromley Mencap is running workshops to help people complete their Census form.

## USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES FOR CARERS

### ***Carers UK 'Looking After Someone' – a guide to carers rights and benefits 2009/10'***

[www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns/CarersRightsDay/Adviceguidesforcarers](http://www.carersuk.org/Newsandcampaigns/CarersRightsDay/Adviceguidesforcarers)

A copy can be downloaded from the link above.

### ***Carer's Allowance e-service***

[www.dwp.gov.uk/carersallowance](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/carersallowance)

This online claim service allows carers to claim Carer's Allowance online and report changes in circumstances.

### ***Where to find a Carer's Allowance claim form to download and complete offline***

[http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimforms/ds7001\\_print.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/advisers/claimforms/ds7001_print.pdf)

### ***Directgov's 'Benefits adviser' service***

[www.direct.gov.uk/benefitsadviser](http://www.direct.gov.uk/benefitsadviser)

People can use the benefits adviser to get an online benefits check, get an estimate of the amount of benefits, tax credits or pension that may be available to them and compare estimates if their situation changes.

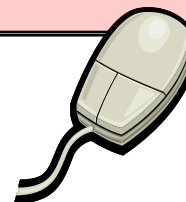
It is *not* suitable for certain groups though, including:

- prisoners
- non-UK nationals
- students
- under 18 year olds
- people permanently in residential care or nursing homes.

### ***Pension Credit calculator***

[www.direct.gov.uk/pccalculator](http://www.direct.gov.uk/pccalculator)

Your entitlement can be checked here.



# WOULD YOU LIKE TO REPRESENT **BROMLEY MENCAP** ON THE **DISABILITY VOICE BROMLEY COMMITTEE?**



Disability Voice Bromley is a group of and for adults with physical disabilities, hearing or sight loss, and their carers, who live or work in the Borough of Bromley.

## **An independent 'voice'**

We are an independent 'voice' speaking up for disabled people and their carers. We do this through meetings and consultations about things that affect our lives including health and care services, transport and getting out and about.

We have a committee which meets regularly and a wider membership that we keep in contact with via email or post.

The committee consists of disabled people and representatives from disability organisations, Adult and Community Services and Bromley Primary Care Trust.

We meet every two months, usually for 2 hours on a Monday morning, at the Ripley Arts Centre, Bromley.

## **Who would like to represent Bromley Mencap?**

Following the Bromley Mencap merger with Bromley Scope we would love to hear from anyone who would like to represent Bromley Mencap on our committee . You need to have an interest in disability issues and a commitment to attend our meetings regularly.

Training is available on how to be an effective committee member, and we have a policy covering reimbursement of expenses.

British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters come to our meetings, but if you would need other communication support, a sitting service, transport or other support, please just let us know.

If you are interested, please contact Joanna Frizelle on 0845 463 2804 or email - [info@disabilityvoicebromley.org.uk](mailto:info@disabilityvoicebromley.org.uk)

### **Key Points:**

- **Disability Voice Bromley is a group that speaks up for disabled people and their carers**
- **It would like a representative from Bromley Mencap**
- **It meets every two months for two hours in Bromley**

*In this 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, Bulletin will be interviewing past and present Chairmen about the history of Bromley Mencap.*

*We start with Leslie Marks, who was Chair of Bromley Mencap from 1969 to 1974.*



**What were the main concerns of members when you were appointed?**

As late as the 1960s, there was still nothing locally for children or adults with learning disabilities, except the adult training centre at Scads Hill, which would take some children, who were considered to be ready, from the age of 7. Children who were severely disabled were not even entitled to go to school, and many parents struggled to cope. Although we had always organised social events for our members and the youth clubs were thriving, the policy of the National Mencap Society at that time was that local groups should not get involved in providing services.

Bromley Mencap did not hold to this view and for over a year members had been discussing whether a Mencap Social Centre or a Children's Hostel was needed most. Almost everyone got caught up in the discussion, particularly the young parents. At the 1969 AGM there was a huge vote in support of a Children's Hostel. I was appointed Chair at that meeting.

**How did you tackle this new resolution?**

We formed a fundraising committee and started to talk to the Council about a joint project. Bromley was now a London borough instead of being part of Kent and this way of working was very new. It took a year, and a great deal of persuasion, but we eventually got the Council's agreement to run the Hostel, if we were able to pay for, and equip a suitable property.

"Centre 70" was adopted as the name of the appeal and within 3 years we had raised enough money to buy a large house in Bromley. It was officially opened in September 1973 by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Social Services, and became the borough's first respite/residential care home.



Leslie Marks, Chair of Bromley Mencap 1969-1974, continued

### **What else was happening at that time?**

In 1970, following the publication of the Seebohm Report, the first Social Services Department was established, bringing social services for adults and children under the same umbrella. In 1971 responsibility for the education of disabled children had transferred from Health & Welfare to the Education committee.

A new Education Act meant that severely disabled children could go to school for the first time and I worked with Bromley's Assistant Director of Education to see what could be provided in the borough. Eventually three Special Opportunity Units were established. Bromley was at the forefront of this new way of thinking and pioneered the idea of integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools.

One of our new projects was to set up a welfare sub-committee. We split the borough into areas and recruited and trained a group of volunteers to visit and support new parents. This was a popular idea which was quickly adopted by other regions. We continued to run regular meetings and social events, which were important and gave parents a sense of togetherness.

We also commissioned a major survey of families to determine their needs and the needs of their children. The next task was to persuade the Council to accept our findings and plan services accordingly.

### **What involvement did Bromley Mencap have with the local community?**

We had always given talks to professionals and local groups but it was now even more important to make people aware of learning disability. For example, we did a lot to reassure residents and get their support for local initiatives such as Angus House, a former seamen's home in Cudham which was being developed as a hostel for adults.

Also, when Woodbrook school opened in Beckenham there was no vehicle to transport the children with severe disabilities. Bromley Mencap got in touch with various women's groups and organised a rota of volunteers to take the children to and from school for 6 months until a new minibus was delivered.

### **How would you sum up your 4 years as Chair?**

My focus was to network, promote good working relationships with the local authority and other organisations and develop new services through harnessing the skills of our members.

***Thanks Leslie!***

Copy deadline for May/June 2011 is 1st May 2011

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