



CREATING FUTURES **TOGETHER**  
TEIGN HOUSING'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

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# INTRODUCTION

This annual report may officially cover the period April 2019 until March 31, 2020, but it would be somewhat of an omission for me not to reflect on the significant human and organisational impact of COVID-19 which falls outside of this timespan.

Firstly, my thoughts are with the family and friends of all those who have lost someone to this disease, or as a result in treatment delays or other reasons linked to it. As a team, we've been supporting residents in many ways, and will continue to do so. Thank you also to all residents for your understanding during full lockdown when we needed to reduce services.

This report is a reflection on life before that time, looking at the strides we made to build new homes, deliver repairs, regenerate existing buildings, offer financial support and much more. In many ways it's these improvements that put us in a strong position to respond to the challenges we now face.

We've also captured in this report some of the revised targets we've set to ensure we get back up to speed as quickly and safely as possible. This includes working through the backlog of repairs, restarting the regeneration work at Kingsway and supporting residents through the financial legacy the disease has left.

It will continue to be an unusual year, but at a time when home has proven to be the safest refuge for so many, our mission that everyone has access to safe, quality, affordable accommodation has never been more important.

**Andy Jones**  
Chair of Teign Housing



# TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

Providing you with the opportunity to influence our work.



## AT A GLANCE

 **89%** of involved residents satisfied that their views are taken into account

**3** scrutiny reports completed 

 **22** residents involved in influencing our work through our formal engagement groups

All figures as at end of March 2020



## SUPPORTING YOU TO HAVE YOUR SAY

We are committed to enabling residents to influence all aspects of our work. We have various panels and groups, and during this year had even more residents than ever contribute their time and opinions. Thank you.

We support this engagement with free training and a dedicated resident involvement post. As part of this, the majority of our involved residents completed Ecolours training, which is designed to help people understand the views and personality

types of others. This was undertaken to boost insightful debate and to learn from each other. The feedback from the session was that it was interesting and well-received.

We welcome involvement from all residents, whether you can attend a group or would like to take part in another way. To get involved and officially feedback your views, then email [getinvolved@teighousing.co.uk](mailto:getinvolved@teighousing.co.uk) or call **01626 322751**.

## SCRUTINY PANEL

During this year, the Scrutiny Panel finished their Planned Maintenance review, carried out an annual review of the compliance with the Consumer Standards and completed a review of the Grounds Maintenance service. The areas of improvement identified during a review are worked on by staff and progress is monitored by the Service Board.

The Panel, for the seventh year running, also checked how well we comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's four Consumer Standards. Members reported that they were happy with the evidence that these four key standards had been met.

## MYSTERY SHOPPING

Each year we complete a mystery shop to test the quality of information we provide to residents. Teign Housing staff are not given notice of when it is taking place.

This year residents tested our response to messages left out of hours, and requesting a call back. The results highlighted that some of the calls were not returned as we would have wanted them to be. We are working with our staff to ensure this improves in the future.



## SATISFACTION OF INVOLVED RESIDENTS

Each year we survey all involved residents to ask how happy they are about the way they are consulted, if they feel their views result in change, whether they have enough information to take part fully and satisfaction with feedback on how their views have been taken into account.

We are pleased to report that overall satisfaction across all the groups was 87%. We will continue to work on the feedback received from these groups to further improve their satisfaction and ensure they know the changes made as a direct result of their involvement.



## IN 2020/21 WE WILL:

- Train our involved residents to use Zoom so we can run groups despite COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. We will look to run more video meetings to increase involvement and help people contribute in a way that suits them.
- Complete a review of Teign Housing's compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.
- Review our web chat and written communication with residents, via video conferencing. We will develop a training session for our teams based on this work.

# OUR SERVICES



Offering all residents a fair, high-quality service which is accessible and delivers value for money

## DIGITAL SERVICES

At the end of March 2020, 295 people had signed up for our online portal My Teign Account.

We also launched Click4Assistance web chat, following a successful trial. People are chatting on a wide variety of topics from enquiries relating to rents, tenancy agreements and garages through to checking repair appointment times. Our residents are generally very complimentary of the service we offer and when we were forced into lockdown, the web chat traffic increased ten-fold.

During the last financial year, we saw a continued, although reduced demand for our DigiBug service. We delivered 21 hours of DigiBug support. There is now more support from other agencies to help people get online for free, so we'll be working with Cosmic and their Positive People scheme to overcome digital exclusion and provide digital support for all those who need it the most in our communities.



## CALL HANDLING AND CONTACT MANAGEMENT

The Business Support Team answer around 2,500 phone calls and respond to over 2,000 emails each month. We've also added web chat into the mix.

We always try and resolve a query first-time, and with the embedding of our new Housing Management System, Civica Cx, during the summer of 2019, and our increased knowledge of the system we're able to talk more confidently to, and provide our callers with, the latest information regarding their enquiry. As our knowledge of the system has increased, we have been able to work on further continuous improvement projects over the course of the year to improve the customer experience.

It was disappointing not to have achieved our target and we know how frustrating it is for our customers to have to wait, however, our focus during the transitional period to Civica Cx was on quality rather than quantity.

Our response times were improving month on month and despite not meeting the year-end target, it was encouraging considering that call volumes had increased significantly. With continued improvement we expect to meet our call targets next year.

	Target	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2017/18
Telephone response rate - calls to our main number answered within 20 seconds	90%	72%	85%	89%
Number of calls	-	30,640	27,396	27,972



The Business Support Team successfully completed the additional soft skills and communications training in April 2019. Over the last year the team have been putting their learning into practice and you know we'd love to hear from you, our residents, first-hand on how we're doing.



## COMPLIMENTS

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time this year to write to us or call us about a member of our team who has gone that extra mile or provided a great service. Each month we publish service stars to recognise employees who have received such thanks. This year, close to 200 service stars were awarded.

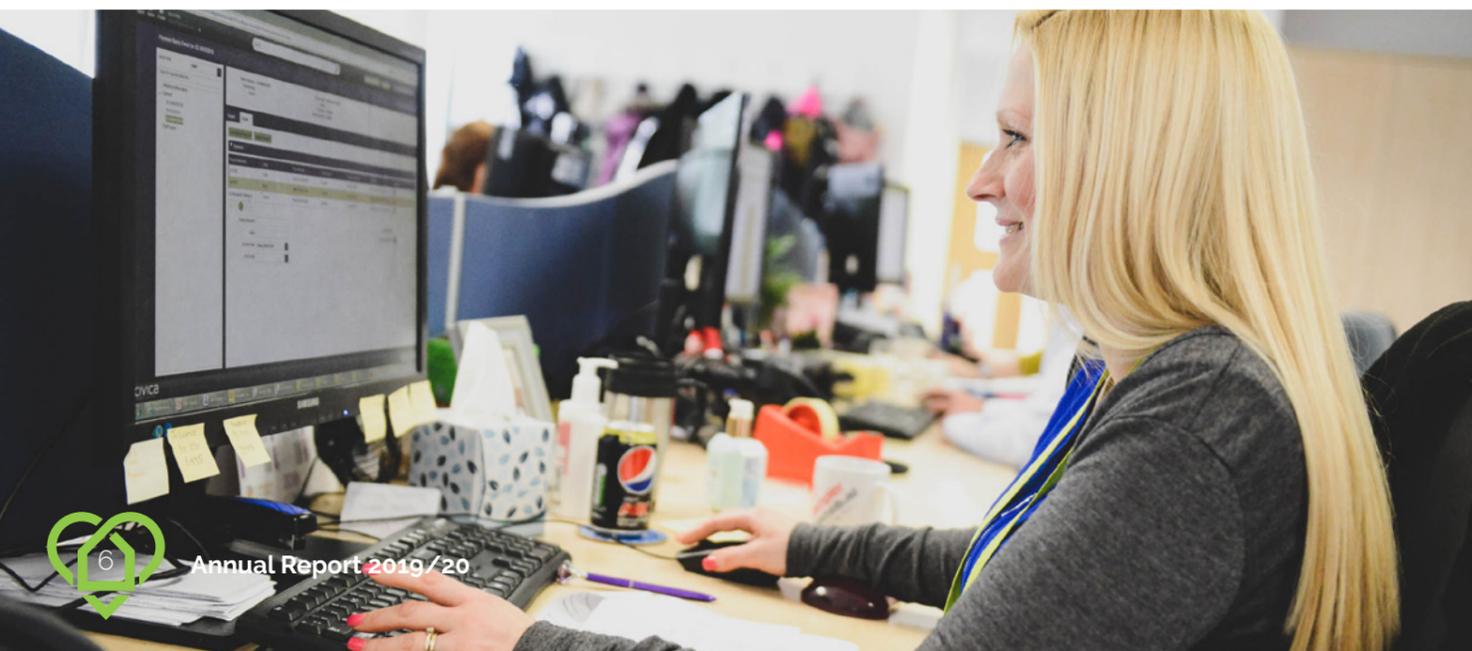
## COMPLAINTS

In April 2019 we reviewed our complaints process and made it simpler for you to contact us via a form on our website and let us know if we'd got something wrong. Every complaint is an opportunity for us to learn and it helps to ensure we don't repeat the same mistake and also have the chance to put things right.

To further improve our complaints process, we have trained up a few residents to sit on any Stage Three panel hearings. In this way, we can ensure we understand the resident experience and view point and take it fully into account in any panel decision.

	Target	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2017/18
Complaints answered on time	100%	97%	91%	96%

This change has seen an increase in complaints to 97, with many people choosing our new option of completing our quick online form.



To ensure we learn from complaints we monitor what they are about to find any common themes:

SERVICE AREA	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Allocations	0	0	2
Anti-Social Behaviour	0	0	3
Estate services	0	0	0
Tenancy management	6	9	1
Rents and service charges	1	0	7
Repairs and maintenance	82	36	44
Staff and customer services	4	2	0
Development	2	0	0
Other	2	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>65</b>

Your feedback told us that this increase in complaints was around communication, missed appointments and the length of time taken to complete a repair. We are working with our teams to improve performance in these areas.

We've significantly improved satisfaction with how complaints are handled. We've spent time reviewing our process, which has seen satisfaction jump from 50% last year to 71%.



## AGEING WELL

Our TeignCare service supported 1,355 customers during 2019/20. We completed 360 new installations, that's nearly one for every day of the year! More than 91% of calls were answered within 90 seconds and satisfaction with the service is at 92%. Ninety-seven per cent said they would trust the service to help them in an emergency situation.

We awarded Appello our community alarm monitoring contract, involving residents in shaping the service level agreement and choosing the final provider. We also built a partnership with South Devon & Torbay NHS Trust so residents could access the ALRT service. This service is a rapid response to help recover non-injured people who have fallen and are unable to support themselves back to a sitting or standing position. Just under 40 people used this last year, meaning they avoided having to wait for an ambulance or attend A&E.

## IN 2020/21 WE WILL:

- Review our complaints process to meet the Housing Ombudsman's new complaint handling code.
- Introduce a cloud based platform that enables our contact centre to function remotely.
- Seek approval from our Board to 'transform' our Independent Living Service.
- Develop a plan to migrate our community alarm system from an analogue to digital platform (to be completed by 2025).
- Offer tailored digital support based on our understanding of residents' needs.



## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

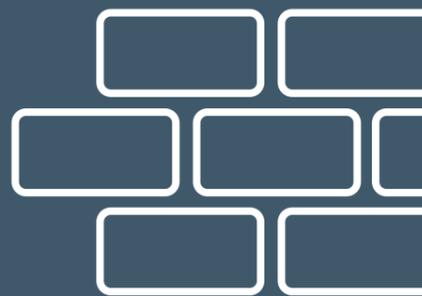
Teign Housing is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion throughout everything we do. Our Respect for People Group is a dedicated staff and involved tenant focus group, who regularly monitor and review our services and processes to ensure that we are supporting both staff and our residents. Recently, the group have had dementia awareness, mental health awareness and domestic abuse training, and have helped develop our Equality and Diversity Policy as well as our company-wide equality and diversity training programme.

We have signed up to some high-profile industry initiatives, including the Chartered Institute of Housing's Equality & Diversity Charter and the 'Make a Stand' against domestic abuse campaign. We are also representing the Gypsy and traveller community on the National Housing Federation's 'We are homeless too' campaign.

We are proud to be a 'Disability Confident Employer' meaning that we will never discriminate against anyone on the grounds of their disability during the recruitment process or employment with us. Equality and diversity is an ongoing priority, and we are set to roll-out many more initiatives and awareness campaigns moving forward.



# HOME



Maintaining all our homes at or above the Government's Decent Homes Standard by providing a repairs and maintenance service in all homes and communal areas. Building new affordable homes to meet local need for a range of people.

## AT A GLANCE



We built **64** homes

We met **100%** Decent Homes Standard compliance



We completed **12,468** repairs

**100%** of emergency repairs were completed on time



## BUILDING NEW HOMES

During 2019/20 we completed 64 new homes, which were a balanced mix of affordable rent and shared ownership.

The new properties include developments at Moorland Reach, in Kingsteignton, Shutterton Lane, in Dawlish, Bishops Court, in Exeter, Great Court Farm, in Totnes, Fordlands, in Moretonhampstead, Heath Hill, in Heathfield and Barley Meadow in Dawlish. We've constructed a range of property types, from flats to large family homes, to suit a wide variety of households.

We have a number of schemes in progress, including new affordable homes under construction in Newton Abbot, Dawlish, Holcombe, Buckfastleigh, Malborough (near Kingsbridge), Honiton and Exmouth. We have planning approval for small in-fill developments of new homes on our estates in Buckfastleigh, Ashburton and Kingsteignton and have applied for planning permission to deliver a further 8 properties on land that we own in Widecombe in Dartmoor National Park.

We will continue to develop our own land and create partnerships with others. We are delighted to have secured a deal with Kier Community Living for 18 new homes at Teign View, Kingsteignton and agreed terms to buy 21 affordable homes from Cavanna in Exeter.

## REPAIRS

Customer satisfaction with repairs ended the year at 96.4%, a very tiny dip of less than 1% compared to last year. In a slight improvement from 2018/2019, our first-time fix rate jumped to 99.6%. We know the response from the team you phone for a repair didn't hit the mark last year. We've been working closely with that team to ensure this improves significantly.



	Target	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2017/18
% of emergency repairs completed on time	100%	100%	99.5%	100%
Appointments made and kept	99%	98.9%	99.1%	99.86%
Number of repairs completed	-	12,468	9,357	11,649



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Teign's housing stock has an average energy efficiency rating of band C (69.52 SAP rating) which is a good result and compares very favourably with other housing providers in the South West. We have a small number of properties which are just below band C and further work is being done to target resources for these properties to bring them up to the required energy efficiency standard, for example by installing high efficiency heating systems and increasing insulation levels in lofts and walls. Our C rating has been independently checked by an external consultancy.

## DECENT HOMES STANDARD

We take a proactive approach to Decent Homes compliance and ensure that fixtures that are approaching their expected life cycle are replaced prior to them becoming potentially non-decent. Our annual 'rolling' stock condition and validation surveys ensures that the information that we hold about our properties and their condition is kept up to date. This has ensured we remain 100% compliant within the parameters set by the Regulator.

## EMPTY HOMES

The average number of days to re-let a property between one resident moving out and another moving in has remained the same as last year, at 20.5 days per property.

We set and achieved our target to reduce any rental income loss caused by not having residents in a property.

## GAS SERVICING

As in previous years, 100% of our homes had their annual gas safety check completed. Please do let us in at the first appointment to allow this essential check to take place. We have revised our visits so they are contact free and with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.

## IN 2020/21 WE WILL:

- Build 40 homes. We had hoped in 2020/21 to finish 74 properties, but Covid-19 meant construction sites halted work and so we needed to revise our target.
- Continue to complete gas safety checks and are aiming for 100% compliance.
- Implement a new improved Void Re-Let property standard, which means that all properties will be fully redecorated internally, prior to being re-let. Carpets will also be provided whenever we let a flat.

# TENANCY



Renting our properties in a fair, transparent and efficient way and develop homes that meet local need. Provide you with the most secure type of tenancy that we can and making sure you can maintain your tenancy with us.



## AT A GLANCE

We helped customers access additional income of some

**£97,000**



We attended **1,495** Keeping in Touch visits



We supported **617** tenants with free financial and employment advice through our Head Start service

**98.5%** of residents were satisfied with the lettings process



**83%** of new residents were satisfied with the condition of their home when they moved in

## HEAD START

Our Head Start service helped more than 600 residents with free financial and employment advice. We welcomed three new Head Start advisors who between them helped residents secure more than £97,000 worth of additional income. During the year we partnered with Homemaker, a local charity specialising in debt management, who helped increase our capacity to deal with cases. During the year they generated around an extra £80,000 of income for our residents.

The Head Start team worked with the Department for Work and Pensions to hold an event in December at the Kingsway Pow Wow Café. Activities were organised for children whilst the Head Start team were there to offer help and advice around income and rents. They also held community events in October and March.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH VISITS

We launched Keeping in Touch (KIT) visits in 2018, and in 2019 we hoped to visit 40% of all households. We didn't meet this target as we had some temporary gaps in our staffing and some residents failed to keep their appointments. The idea behind KIT visits is to ensure you know the team working in your area, to give you a named contact and allow us to find out what would help you enjoy your home more. We visited 35% of our total homes, and will resume face to face KIT visits, when it is safe for you and our staff. As a direct result of KIT, we have seen three new involved residents joining our groups.



## DIRECT DEBIT OPTIONS

More than 40% of residents now pay their rent by Direct Debit. We are now striving to reach 50% next year.

## HOARDING SUPPORT

Our team has undergone training to help us recognise the signs of hoarding and understand how best to support residents experiencing this disorder. We invited partners from the Fire and Rescue Service and Community Safety Partnership to attend with us. We have now created an action plan on how we will work with residents whose hoarding is a health and safety risk.



## IN 2020/21 WE WILL:

- Conduct no less than 1,500 KITs.
- Offer support from a Head Start Advisor to all new residents for the first 12 months.



# NEIGHBOURHOOD

Working with you and other organisations to provide social, environmental and economic wellbeing and keep neighbourhoods and communal areas clean and safe.



## COMMUNITY CHARTERS

This year we introduced Community Charters for new developments. The first to benefit were the residents who were due to move into a new development at Moorhen Close, Kingsteignton. We held an interactive day so residents could get to know each other and to let everyone shape the Charter.

We've since held another five Community Charter events attended by more than 40 people and will draw up Community Charters for all our new developments

## AT A GLANCE



We gave around **£4,600** to help local projects through the Community Chest scheme

We ran six Community Charter events, attended by more than **40** people

We held **60** housing surgeries



## PATCH PROMISES

We have introduced Patch Promises for the east and west of our area. These have seen us promise to:

1. Hold monthly housing surgeries in each community hub
2. Organise a quarterly partnership event at each hub
3. Provide, with partners, a holiday kitchen project during at least one school holiday

We have delivered the Patch Pod Promise, allowing us a better presence within the area and to deliver holistic services.



## ESTATE INSPECTIONS AND HOUSING SURGERIES

We are continuing to inspect our estates every three months. We were on target to reach 100% of our planned estate inspections, but due to the pandemic and enforced lockdown we were just shy of this target.

We held 60 housing surgeries across all our areas, and ran well-attended community events. These included Kingsway Carnival in April 2019, a Christmas event at the Pow Wow café and a Halloween - Maximise your Money Event held in Buckland.

## ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

We handled 22 cases of ASB this year, with 100% handled within our target timescales and following the correct process. Customer satisfaction with how we handle ASB reports is 100%.

We went live in November with a new ASB policy, aimed at better supporting those experiencing significant, repeated problems in their community.

During 2019/20 we also signed up to the Chartered Institute of Housing's Make a Stand Pledge. This saw us pledge to achieve four focused commitments to provide support for people experiencing domestic abuse.

We also signed a partnership with a strategic domestic abuse forum, the Multi Agency Risk Action Committee, to help victims of domestic abuse.



**IN 2020/21 WE WILL:**

- Provide another £5,000 Community Chest funding to support local community projects that improve the lives of our residents.
- Launch an Assisted Lettings Scheme, giving eligible residents access to free appliances and furniture.
- Open our drop-down zones, allowing staff to work in our communities.
- Work with the Totnes Connection Hub, a multi-agency group whose members include local foodbanks, homeless charities and local authorities.
- Publish all of our estate inspection dates on our website.
- Trial the Noise App with residents and staff with a view to launching it as an improvement to our ASB service.
- Help shape the new Domestic Bill by feeding customers' experiences and our views into the Domestic Abuse Commissioner at the Home Office.

**HALDON**

In May 2019 Teign Housing hosted the National Advisory Gypsy and Travellers meeting at Haldon where a site visit was conducted, and good practice shared. We appointed a new Neighbourhood Services Advisor for Haldon. It benefited from surgeries, site inspections and a newly formed residents group.

We also set-up a monthly meeting with Teignbridge District Council and the police looking at anti-social behaviour to help residents.

**TENANTS' FORUM COMMUNITY CHEST**

Each year we invite community groups to bid for a slice of a £5k pot of funding. This year the Tenants' Forum approved donations to a local lunch club, Devon Youth Service, Broadlands Court Residents, Friends of South Dartmoor Association and more. The monies have funded external tree lights, social events, expedition kits for kids, outdoor benches, plants, interactive workshops and many other items aimed at improving the lives of residents.



**DROP DOWN ZONES**

Although COVID-19 has delayed the opening, during the last year we put in place six Drop Down Zones for staff to work remotely from. In June we closed our Newton Abbot office 'The Shop' due to wider plans to regenerate the town centre.

By allowing staff to work within their patch we will be more visible and accessible to residents, as well as reducing our carbon footprint as staff won't have to drive to our head office. All our front-line housing staff now have laptops to support remote working.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

During the year we launched a new Health and Safety policy designed to make reporting simpler. As a practical example we signed a partnership agreement with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. This means our residents can benefit from the free home visiting service, which offers personalised assistance regarding fire safety in the home.

**ESTATE SERVICES**

During this year we made the decision to bring in-house all Grounds Maintenance services. This went live in April 2020 and we are closely monitoring the quality of the work and resident feedback.



# ECONOMIC



Charge rent in line with the standards set out by the Government's direction. We will provide cost-effective, efficient and good quality services and homes and show how we are using our finances to provide good value for money.

## AT A GLANCE

We collected **99.64%** of rent due 

**633** of our residents had to claim Universal Credit 

 **71.3%** of our residents pay their rent in advance

 We launched a new housing management system

## RENT COLLECTION RATE

We collected 99.64% of the rent due to us. During the year, we went live with a new system called Mobysoft's Rent Sense. This is predictive analytic software which uses algorithms and, when working in tandem with our own rents policy and housing management system, allows us to identify those most in need of support.

## NEW SYSTEM

We launched a new system for managing data and contact with you. Although this is behind the scenes for most residents, it has speeded up how we handle enquiries and allows us to better understand the services you want from us. We now save around 15% of staff time on each transaction, allowing us to use that time in other ways to improve our services.



## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Universal Credit (UC) came into force in Teignbridge in September 2018 for everyone of working age claiming benefits who had a change in circumstances. We worked to ensure 606 UC claims were verified to ensure that residents received their money on time. 

## VALUE FOR MONEY

Teign Housing continues to be fully committed to delivering Value for Money (VfM). We remain focused on providing a good level of customer service, whilst ensuring that our resources are used in an innovative and cost-effective way. Our costs increased this year as we employed extra staff to support our digital offer to residents and to increase the help residents can access from Head Start. We also spent additional income on the Kingsway regeneration project, our IT software, and increased repairs. Continued scrutiny of management costs and tight budgetary control going forward will ensure the overall efficiency of the organisation.

We publish every year a Value for Money statement. You can find it [here](#).

## IN 2020/21 WE WILL:

- Extend our relationship with MobySoft to help improve our rent collection performance.



Thank you to all our residents, partners and employees for your support and kindness across the year.

If you require this document in large print, to be translated or in a different format, please let us know.

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