



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
&  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021

Registered office      Cobblestones, Chelmsford Road, Felsted, Essex, CM6 3EP

*Registered charity No. 1057876    Company No. 3233796*

ESSEX GARDENS TRUST  
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021

President: The Lord Petre

Vice President: Marion Swetenham

Trustees and Members of the Management Committee:

Patricia Sinclair Chair

Stephen Ogle Honorary Treasurer and Company Secretary

Adrian Gascoyne

Tricia Moxey

Jane Palmer

Carol White

Co-opted Members of the Management Committee: Jill Plater and David Andrews

Board Secretary: Vacant

Research Team Coordinator: Patricia Sinclair

Conservation Officer: David Andrews

Communications Team: Jane Palmer; & one position Vacant

Journal Editor: Heather Hunter

Membership Secretary: Carol White

Events Team Coordinator: Vacant

Artist in Residence: Jane Fredericks

EGT Representative on Management  
Committee of Warley Place, Brentwood Ailsa Wildig

Patrons:

Adrian Gascoyne

Dr David Hessayon

Jill Plater

Prof. Tim Middleton

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The Trust's descriptor is 'Caring about our green spaces', and its objectives are:

Sharing our love of gardens and landscapes, their history, their design, their making and the stories that surround them; and fostering that love in others by:

- Organising visits, talks, and communications for the education, interest and enjoyment of our members and friends
- Protecting the precious green spaces of Essex, past and present, and influencing their future by identifying and recording their details, publishing that information freely and using our knowledge to provide informed comment on relevant plans for development.

### **FROM THE CHAIR**

Essex Gardens Trust was founded in 1996 as part of the County Gardens Trust movement which was growing in strength across the country. This meant, of course, that 2021 was our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, a date to be proud of and one we wanted to commemorate. We had therefore begun planning possible celebrations early; yet, the advent of Covid-19 in 2020 meant that all occasions when our members would be together had to be put on hold. Even re-planning was difficult as it was impossible to know if or when circumstances would improve.

Yet, as lockdowns of various intensities came and went over the following months, and advice on how to keep ourselves safe became clearer, we soon became nimble at spotting new opportunities. I'm therefore glad to report that, despite coronavirus restrictions, we were able to mark our 25<sup>th</sup> year in style. We produced two special-edition Journals, held an Anniversary Garden Party at the beautiful Repton landscape of Rivenhall Place (and our thanks go to members, Mr & Mrs Richard Barber, who generously opened their garden to us and provided us, not just with a talk and tour, but an abundance of delicious cakes – always an important part of an EGT event) and, finally, we completed our special year with an engaging 'Anniversary' talk by Matthew Wilson in which he described the challenges he met as Curator of two contrasting RHS gardens: first at Hyde Hall in Essex, and later moving to Harlow Carr in Yorkshire.

As you will read below, we also became familiar with Zoom during the year, making good use of this application to ensure EGT remained both active and in touch with our members. Our regular management committee meetings were able to continue 'virtually', and our Research team, Events Team and Editorial team meetings also took place over zoom. We were still able to offer our Autumn/Winter talks programme to our members, albeit over the internet, and we increased our contact with members via our Blogs and E-Newsletters as well as the EGT Website. We were also extremely heartened by the appreciation we received from our members for these efforts.

As the year moved on, summer approached and restrictions began to lift, we once more felt we were in a position to offer garden visits. (Our organization is, of course, lucky in that gardens are 'well ventilated' and 'generous social distancing' is possible.) Again, we were helped by our wonderful members, and we were able to put two visits in place at relatively short notice, the first as a social (and sociable) evening at Fudlers Hall; the second, a fascinating tour of Shrubs Farm (and our thanks go to Gillie & Ashley Meacock and Sarah & Bob Erith).

Moving on, now, to matters administrative, I am very pleased to take this opportunity to welcome Adrian Gascoyne as an EGT Trustee, a new role which is in addition to his existing position as an EGT Patron. Adrian is Head of Place Services at Essex County Council where he manages a team of environmental consultants who provide specialist advice to planning authorities on planning applications affecting their administrative area. The team also advises local authorities and other public bodies, and third sector organisations, on the conservation management of the natural, historic and built environment, including historic parks and gardens and other heritage assets and green spaces. Place Services and EGT therefore have similar aims in caring for our gardens, parks and landscape heritage, and Adrian brings an additional depth of professionalism to the EGT board.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow trustees, members of the Management Committee and our EGT volunteers and friends for all the support they have given both to the Trust, and to me personally, over the last year. It has been a challenging time and has entailed a lot of hard work, but ultimately, and as our growing membership clearly demonstrates, it has been a successful and rewarding one. Thank you.

*Patricia Sinclair*

## **REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

### **Publicity, Communication and Publications**

One of our ongoing challenges is to get EGT better known to the people of Essex so we were pleased to be invited to take part in English Heritage's 'Blooming Gardens Weekend' in June at Audley End. We had several visitors to our stand which was located in an excellent spot near the house, and a successful two days was completed by acquiring a new EGT volunteer and two new EGT members. We are also grateful for the help and support of Head Gardener (and EGT member), Louise Ellis.

We are fortunate to have a new Newsletter editor. Heather Hunter, a member of the EGT Research Team, agreed to take on the role and, with the help of a small team, has successfully produced two excellent and fitting journals for EGT's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

EGT's presence on social media has continued to grow with the number of Facebook followers increasing from 363 to 454 and Twitter followers up from 105 to 143. Instagram, a newer form of social media to us, now has 191 followers and is run by Grace Lynch, a student at WUC, on our behalf. These forms of communication are useful for reaching non-members and a younger demographic.

Newsletters covering gardening topics and advertising our events are sent out monthly both to members and also to those who have requested to receive our emails through Mailchimp. The EGT blog continues, but now on an occasional basis.

The website continues to be an integral part of telling the public about us, with over 12,500 individual views over the last 12 months.

## **Conservation**

Planning applications relating to registered gardens and historic designed landscapes on Historic England's National Heritage List are sent to us for comment by The Gardens Trust. In addition, applications which might affect sites on our inventories are referred to us by those planning authorities for which inventories exist. Most of these applications are householder applications, minor matters which rarely affect 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset (i.e. a registered garden) is experienced', to use the definition of setting in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The 'garden communities' proposed in the north Essex councils' local plans for West of Braintree (around Great Saling) and at Easton Lodge have been dropped following a planning inspector's report. Both would have affected registered sites. However, Land Securities, which owns much of the former Maynard estate in the Little Easton area, has now come forward with an application to build 1000 houses north-west of Dunmow, but not close enough to Little Easton Lodge for an objection to be sustained.

Solar farms, necessary to achieve national carbon reduction targets, are beginning to have an unavoidable impact on the landscape, though with careful selection of sites their obtrusiveness can be mitigated. This not so in the case of an application for a solar farm on Main Road, Danbury. We objected to this on account of its proximity to registered landscapes at Danbury Country Park (already considered at risk by Historic England) and at Riffhams. The application remains undetermined.

Shortgrove, Newport, a registered Capability Brown landscape, continues to be under siege from applications for development at the buildings within it. Individually these may seem unobjectionable, but collectively their incremental effect will be appreciable. Incremental damage is probably the most difficult to assess and check. One application has been for the residential conversion of modern barns in a secluded wooded part of the estate. This has been approved, effectively automatically,

under class Q of the General Permitted Development Order. Now the applicant has approached us for support for the argument that a large new house would look better than a converted Dutch barn and should be substituted for it. This is gaming the planning system, not a conversation we are prepared to have, and would be likely to accelerate the suburbanisation of this part of the estate.

We were pleased last year when the Beth Chatto Gardens were added to the National Heritage List. Less satisfactory was the receipt of an application for business units and 85 houses at the nearby Lanswood Business Park. Whilst the existing Business Park is a discrete development on a brownfield site and a good example of its kind, the housing is required as enabling development to pay for the infrastructure costs of building further business units. This application was in the making before the Beth Chatto Gardens were registered, and the application has been approved.

A fine example of conservation and the role of EGT is Warley Place. In the late 1990s, Paul Carter, the owner of Warley Place, was concerned about the care of the historic garden aspect of Miss Willmott's garden. EGT had just been formed and was instrumental and supportive in producing a management plan that ensured the importance of the garden's history was recognised. One of the conditions for a new lease to Essex Wildlife Trust was that a member of EGT was on the management committee of Warley Place. Ailsa Wildig has filled this role since the outset, and we are grateful to her and the many other EGT members who have supported, and continue to support, the ongoing research there.

## **Events**

This year has resumed our series of talks through using the online Zoom facility, both EGT's own zoom application and, for larger audiences, in partnership with The Gardens Trust. Alan Gray described the development of his East Ruston garden from a bare field to an amazing array of plants and vistas. Kate Harwood introduced us to Ian Hamilton's 'Improvement Garden' at Stockwood Park, Luton, while Timothy Walker (with considerable humour) covered 400 years of gardening and botany at the University of Oxford's Botanic Garden.

We also made available on demand the film '5 Seasons - the Gardens of Piet Oudolf'. Some tickets still remain and will be made available again over the coming winter months.

An exciting new addition to the Events programme this year were the three, highly successful 'Tour and Draw' days organised and run by Jane Frederick whom we had earlier appointed as our Artist in Residence. At Easton Lodge, Cressing Temple Barns and Markshall Estate, Jane arranged a private talk and guided tour around the gardens, and then helped participants to sketch their chosen aspects of the garden through general demonstrations of technique and then 'one to one' guidance. The last T&D day was sold out, and three more are planned for next Spring/Summer.

Fortunately, as restrictions eased, we were able to resume our popular EGT garden visits:

Gillie and Ashley Meacock generously opened their floriferous garden to us, one evening, at Fudlers Hall. We enjoyed their abundant borders and fine views over the neighbouring countryside; and when the rain began and we fled into their large barn where we enjoyed the rest of the evening with wine and nibbles and catching up with old friends after months of lockdown.

Robert Erith entertained and educated us in equal measure as he guided us around the extensive landscape and gardens that has been created at Shrubs Farm. As well as enjoying the beautiful view of the Stour valley and walks through woodland, we were introduced to Robert's amazing collection of oak trees from around the world. Our walk and talk over, Sally Erith kindly revived us all with tea and delicious cakes in another large and beautiful barn.

Our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events have been described earlier.

## **Education**

Alison Moller repeated her successful Garden History series. We were very fortunate to be able to hold this 'in person' at Writtle University College following a brief relaxation of some of the Covid restrictions. Short follow-up courses are planned for the coming autumn (in person) and spring (via zoom).

Our Academic travel bursary is on hold as coronavirus restrictions have meant neither of the last two winners has been able to make their journeys. However, we hope that they may be able to organise their travel in 2022 and 2023 in which case their talks will then be available to our members later.

We continued with our Writtle University Student awards and supported a trainee gardener at the Springfield Trust.

## **Research and Garden History**

Perhaps the most important activity of the last year has been the Unforgettable Landscapes project to record the historic gardens and landscapes of Thurrock. This project, part-funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Land of the Fanns programme, with the balance provided by Essex Gardens Trust, has been outstandingly led by garden historian, writer and lecturer, Twigs Way.

Fortunately, as the impact of Covid arrived at the start of the project, constructive and valuable research was possible through extensive desk and on-line research. Initially some 100 potential sites were identified from old maps and local knowledge. Further research added a few more 'possibles' while eliminating many more as either having no particular historic significance or because they no longer exist. In recent months, on site visits have become possible and most of the research has now

been completed with the team are working hard at writing up the findings. It is expected that about 25 sites will appear in the final inventory.

Although some delays were inevitably caused by Covid, the high quality of the research and documentation has meant that the project should be completed in November.

Throughout the project, the researchers have remained engaged and committed, and it is hoped that a follow up project can soon begin to publish a book on the *Lost Gardens of Thurrock*. This will include some of the results already obtained from heritage sites that could not be included in the inventory as, disappointingly, there were no remains, or insufficient remains to require protection.

### **Essex Women's Commemoration Project**

As part of an Essex-wide project aimed at commemorating significant and influential women whose history may have overlooked, EGT was contacted with a view to identifying and commemorating women horticulturalists, growers and gardeners who had made a significant contribution to the rich history of Essex. There have been many women over the years who have contributed to our county's gardens, landscapes, and the horticultural heritage and who feature in the research work and publications of EGT. Celebrating and commemorating their achievements feels very much in keeping with EGT's aims. We will be using an online poll and asking members to select 3 women who they feel have been most influential. Plaques, similar to those used by English Heritage, will be sponsored by Essex Gardens Trust and located at a place that is significant and where they will be seen by women, young and old, and be a source of inspiration.

### **Membership**

Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic and lockdowns which meant we were unable to meet face to face for much of the year, it is encouraging to be able to report that our membership continues to increase steadily. During our last financial year (1.7.20 to 30.6.21), EGT membership has again grown, from 166 to 173 total members.

New members have been drawn from an increasing variety of sources as we have extended the range of our activities in the Trust. We have gained new members from among our volunteer researchers and also the attendees of Alison Moller's extremely popular Garden History courses. Other people have 'discovered' EGT through the internet, at one-off events such as the 'Blooming Gardens Weekend' at Audley End, and from our new 'Tour and Draw' days. Pleasingly, 'Word of mouth' also continues to bring us new members as people recommend our various activities to their friends.



## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

Unrestricted grants and donations totalled £1,310, including £1,000 from the Essex Club for which we are very grateful. A grant of £5,000 was received to research and record 'Unforgettable Gardens' in the Thurrock area. as part of the Land of the Fanns Landscape Partnership Scheme supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

Income from membership fees and gift aid at £1,920 and £408 in the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 dropped slightly from those for the previous year (£2,037 and £414, respectively).

Income and expenditure from events were both lower than the previous year but successful ZOOM based talks provided a welcome contribution. Overall the 2020/21 programme resulted in a surplus of £989 compared with £1503 for 2019/20.

£4,250 has been spent on the services of the co-ordinator of the Unforgettable Landscapes project. No costs were incurred this year on other garden history activities

The cost of grants and awards amounted to £903 compared with £700 in the previous year

Administration costs fell to £2,116 from £2,748. The previous year had included the design and printing of new leaflets and a reception held to show appreciation of our volunteers.

Overall unrestricted income exceeded unrestricted expenditure by £1,720 in the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 compared with a deficit of £807 in the previous year.

The total budget for the Unforgettable Landscapes is £8,000. The matching funds from our own resources amounts to £3,000 and this sum has been transferred from our general reserve to the project account.

After this transfer there was a net deficit of £1,280 in our Unrestricted reserve, which at the end of the year amounted to £16,042.

## **Reserves**

The Trustees consider that the Trust should hold reserves equal to two years' average running costs, which would amount to around £6,000. The additional reserves enable the Trust to invest in new research or outreach activities.

**RISK REVIEW**

The Trustees have considered carefully the risks which face the Trust in particular in relation to organised events and research activities involving visits to private property and have put in place measures to mitigate them.

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The governing document of the Essex Gardens Trust is its Memorandum and Articles of Association. Its Trustees are elected by the members in general meeting. The Trustees may co-opt persons to the Board; any person so co-opted must stand for election at the next Annual General Meeting.

The Trustees who are in office at the time of signing this report are listed on page 1. All served throughout the year except for Adrian Gascoyne who was appointed on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

**PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Charities Act 2011 obliges the Trust to demonstrate public benefit in the work that it undertakes.

The Trustees believe that the work of the Essex Gardens Trust demonstrates public benefit by its activities on behalf of the public in respect of gardens and landscapes in Essex.

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial accounts for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of company's affairs as at the end of the financial year and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these accounts the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- follow applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departure disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board of Trustees approved this report on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:

*Stephen Ogle*      Company Secretary

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES		Restricted fund		Total	Unrestricted
		Unrestricted funds	Unforgettable Landscapes	Funds	funds
		2021	2021	2021	2020
Note		£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>					
	Grants and donations	1,310		1,310	109
	Membership fees	1,920		1,920	2,037
	Gift aid	408		408	414
	Garden History activities	15	5,000	5,015	434
	Events	2,014		2,014	3,143
	Bank interest	145		145	151
	Other	-		-	230
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,812</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>10,812</b>	<b>6,518</b>
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>					
	Garden History activities	-	4,250	4,250	2,189
	Grants and awards	903		903	700
	Events	1,025		1,025	1,640
	Communication and administration	2,116		2,116	2,748
	<b>Governance costs</b>	<b>48</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>
	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>4,092</b>	<b>4,250</b>	<b>8,342</b>	<b>7,325</b>
	<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>2,470</b>	<b>-807</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses):</b>					
	Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-
	Transfer	-3,000	3,000	-	
	<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>-1,280</b>	<b>3,750</b>	<b>2,470</b>	<b>-807</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
	Total funds brought forward	17,322	-	17,322	18,129
	<b>Total funds at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021</b>	<b>£16,042</b>	<b>£3,750</b>	<b>£19,792</b>	<b>£17,322</b>

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**BALANCE SHEET**

**AS AT 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors and prepayments	10	651	538
Short term deposits		12,803	12,647
Cash at bank and in hand		6,866	4,157
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>20,320</u>	<u>17,342</u>
Creditors and income in advance: amounts falling due within one year	11	528	20
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>		<u>£19,792</u>	<u>£17,322</u>
 <b>Funds of Essex Gardens Trust</b>			
Unrestricted funds		16,042	17,322
Unforgettable Landscapes		3,750	
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>£19,792</u>	<u>£17,322</u>

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

*Stephen Ogle* (Honorary treasurer)

## **Notes forming part of the Financial Statements**

### **1. Accounting Policies**

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and in the preceding year.

#### **(a) Basis of Accounting**

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

#### **(b) Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of Essex Gardens Trust. The Unforgettable Landscapes fund is restricted to the purpose agreed with the grant provider.

#### **(c) Incoming Resources**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when Essex Gardens Trust is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income, Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and membership fees and is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by Essex Gardens Trust, are recognised when Essex Gardens Trust becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. The value of donated services, including those provided by volunteers has not been included in these financial statements.

Investment income is included as earned.

#### **(d) Resources expended**

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by Essex Gardens Trust in the delivery of its activities. It includes the direct costs of such activities

Governance costs include those direct costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of Essex Gardens Trust.

#### **(e) Stocks**

No monetary value is attributed to stocks of publications for sale or held to support research activities.

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**Notes forming part of the Financial Statements (continued)**

Note	Total Funds 2021	Unrestricted Funds 2020
	£	£
<b>2</b>		
<b>Income from Research activities</b>		
<i>Unrestricted</i>		
Repton Revisited	-	280
Other publications	15	154
<i>Restricted - Unforgettable landscapes</i>		
Land of the Fanns grant	5,000	
	<b>5,015</b>	<b>434</b>
<b>3</b>		
<b>Income from events</b>		
<i>Unrestricted</i>		
AGM event	-	860
Other events	2,014	2,283
	<b>2,014</b>	<b>3,143</b>
<b>4</b>		
<b>Other income</b>		
<i>Unrestricted</i>		
Sale of donated books	-	230
	-	<b>230</b>
<b>5</b>		
<b>Research activities</b>		
<i>Unrestricted</i>		
Paid coordinator	-	1,200
Garden History training	-	492
Cost of publications	-	497
Other	-	-
<i>Restricted - Unforgettable landscapes</i>		
Paid coordinator	4,250	-
	<b>4,250</b>	<b>2,189</b>
<b>6</b>		
<b>Grants and awards</b>		
<i>Unrestricted</i>		
Travel award	-	500
WUC student awards	200	200
Easton Lodge – Peto balustrade	250	-
Springmead Trust – trainee gardener	453	-
	<b>903</b>	<b>700</b>

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		Total Funds 2021	Unrestricted Funds 2020
		£	£
7	<b>Events</b>		
	<i>Unrestricted</i>		
	AGM event	-	1,388
	Other events	1,025	1,472
		<b>1,025</b>	<b>2,860</b>
8	<b>Communication and administration</b>		
	<i>Unrestricted</i>		
	Journal, newsletters, printing and stationery	898	677
	New flyers	-	429
	Website	196	219
	Subscription to The Gardens Trust	258	256
	Volunteers' reception	-	360
	Postage and telephone	314	284
	Insurance	343	361
	Bank charges	78	60
	Other	29	102
		<b>2,116</b>	<b>2,748</b>
9	<b>Corporate Governance</b>		
	<i>Unrestricted</i>		
	Registration fees	48	48
		<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>
10	<b>Debtors and prepayments</b>		
	Prepayments	467	454
	Accrued interest receivable	37	49
	Other	147	35
		<b>651</b>	<b>538</b>
11	<b>Creditors and income in advance</b>		
	Creditors	528	20
		<b>528</b>	<b>20</b>
12	<b>Essex Gardens Trust is limited by guarantee.</b>		

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