

2020

A YEAR TO DATE



THE
THOROUGHBRED
BREEDERS'
ASSOCIATION



Introduction from the Chairman

We live in extraordinary times. The Covid-19 pandemic has cast a shadow across almost every aspect of life and my thoughts are with those who have been affected by this virus.

For breeders, the threat of an interrupted breeding season added to daily pressures and concerns, with many fearing the serious long-term consequences for their operations and the wider British thoroughbred breeding and racing industries.

We have been heartened by the collaborative and supportive nature of all in the industry who rallied around in this time of crisis. We are all custodians of the breed. It is our duty and responsibility as the TBA to support breeders and the industry, to ensure a long-term sustainable future.

Our specific areas of focus may have changed since the start of 2020, but our overall strategic objectives remain the same. We have adapted and responded to new circumstances, and are reviewing our longer-term projects to ensure they continue to address current and future needs of breeders and racing.

The results of the Economic Impact Study of 2018 formed the basis of our evidence-based strategy, and key activities to support breeders were accelerated during this time, to deliver meaningful help to the industry. The Great British Bonus Scheme, launched in tandem with the resumption of racing, is aimed at rewarding supporters of British-bred stock and raising awareness of the benefits of purchasing eligible horses. The Digital Equine Movement System (DEMS) was also implemented ahead of schedule – being originally planned for use in a post-Brexit environment – and our thanks go to the team at Weatherbys for their help in delivering this.

The ongoing work of the TBA board, committees and executive throughout this year has ensured a safe continuation of the covering season. Our thanks must also go to the Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) for its support, and the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) and other stakeholders for their collective effort in the safe resumption of racing.

Living with the virus will mean adapting our popular events and activities calendar to the 'new normal', and will undoubtedly result in more of our services moving across to digital platforms. It is encouraging to see that our members have embraced the changes and we

are engaging with our membership in many more ways than ever before. The enforced change of using online procedures and protocols, developed to allow the covering season to continue, has helped bring many breeders into the digital world.

There are many challenges ahead and, with your support, the TBA will be working on behalf of breeders' interests to ensure the future of the British thoroughbred.

Julian Richmond-Watson
Chairman



The TBA's vision and five strategic priorities

VISION

To improve the sustainability, resilience and impact of the British breeding industry by safeguarding the legacy of world-class British breeding for racing and future generations to come.

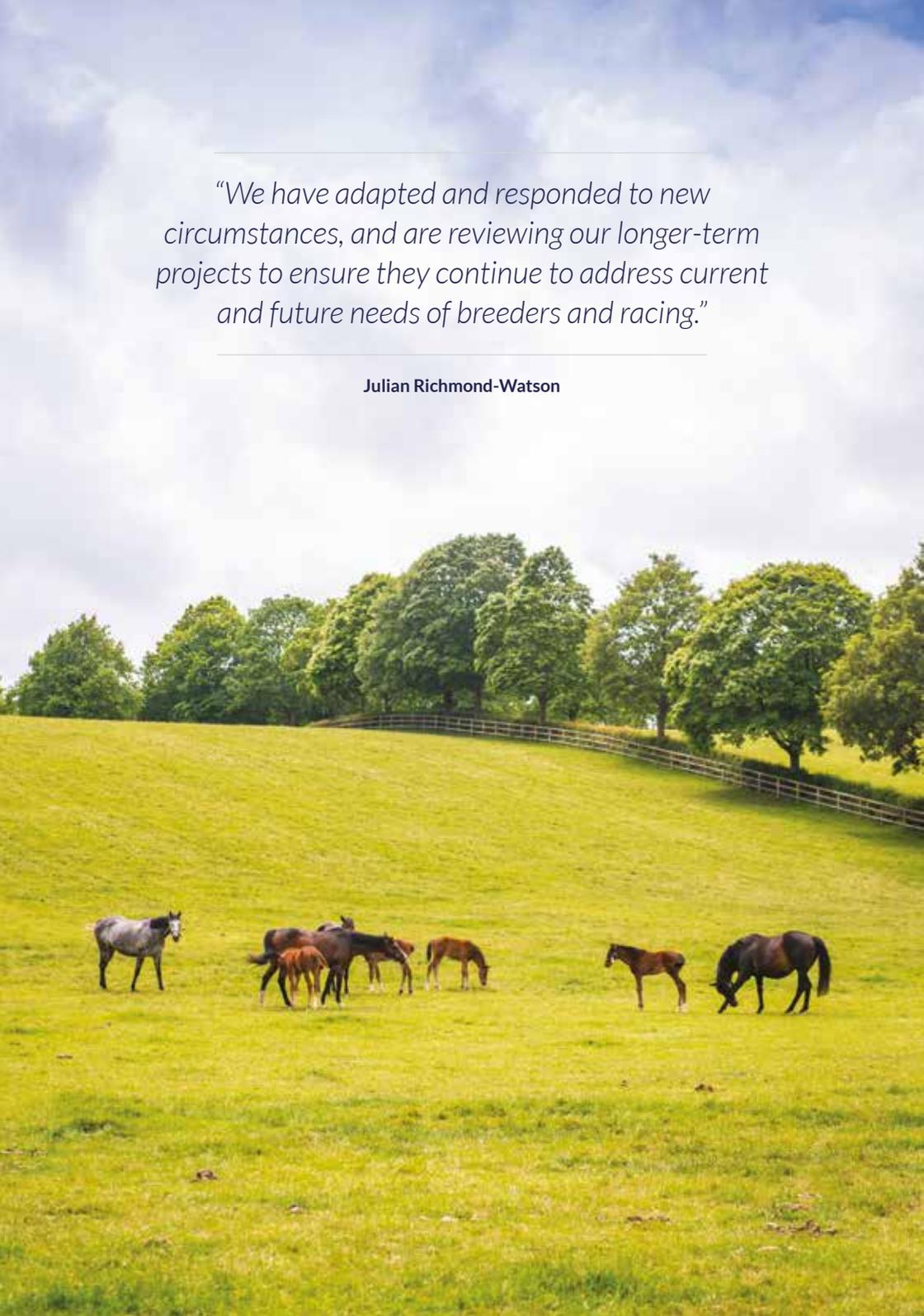
The TBA's Board of 12 Trustees reviews the association's aims, objectives and activities each year, the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to breeders, the racing industry and wider economy.

In 2020, the TBA is implementing the second year of a three-year strategic plan that was largely informed by the publication in 2018 of an independent Economic Impact Study by PwC. The report summarised the importance of the British breeding industry to the rural economy and employment. It also identified a worrying decline in the profitability of breeders, breeders exiting the sector and the scale of skills gaps in studs.

The TBA has five core strategic objectives:

- 1 Shape national and international policy for the thoroughbred breeding industry
- 2 Support breeders in their care of horses and employees
- 3 Protect the diversity and promote the development of the thoroughbred breed
- 4 Advance the development of employees within the British breeding industry
- 5 Secure the health of and support veterinary research into thoroughbred breeding

The ability of the TBA to adapt to wider economic, political and social factors is constantly being considered by its Trustees, with the need for the industry to become more sustainable, adjusting to new challenges and become more resilient. This has never been more important than in 2020.



“We have adapted and responded to new circumstances, and are reviewing our longer-term projects to ensure they continue to address current and future needs of breeders and racing.”

Julian Richmond-Watson

Response to Covid-19

Even before the UK government imposed nationwide lockdown restrictions in the middle of March, the TBA had been working to adapt to the threat of Covid-19 for the industry, members and the team at Stanstead House. Embracing new technologies and adapting to home working ensured that the TBA team continued to function throughout 2020, providing industry support and membership services.

The safe continuation of the covering season quickly became the most pressing matter to ensure the medium and long-term impacts on future foal crops were minimised. Any curtailment would undoubtedly have had ramifications on the wider breeding and racing ecosystem, including future sales, the race programme, race field sizes and – ultimately – levy yields.

The TBA liaised with government departments, veterinary and transport sectors to produce a set of protocols and online resources for the safe continuation of the thoroughbred breeding season. Adherence to government guidance and the breeding protocols were essential to maintain the British breeding industry’s reputation as bio-security responsible.

Communication with national veterinary bodies was productive during this time. Talks with the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), and the veterinary regulator – the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons – brought about the resumption of reproductive services for thoroughbreds in accordance with health and safety protocols.

The TBA joined Weatherbys to work to accelerate the launch of the Digital Equine Movement System (DEMS), which was able to monitor horse movements across premises, increasing traceability and adding additional assurance to authorities.

A Covid-19 hub was created and published on the website, to give guidance and advice to breeders during the pandemic. It was launched with essential information and resources, including the Protocols for Thoroughbred Breeders, letter templates, employee training guidance and supplementary information on the provision of veterinary services. Wider government advice on health and business was also posted to the hub to help the thoroughbred breeding community by directing visitors to official sources of information and relevant support schemes.

During this time, the TBA worked to keep members and the industry as up to date as possible, through a number of ways:

- TBA Covid-19 hub
- Covid-19 update emails
- Social media announcements

- TBA Forum, Thoroughbred Owner Breeder magazine
- Advertisements in industry media
- Industry media interviews

A TBA-commissioned survey was carried out in April to better understand the environment and issues affecting breeders, and the TBA collaborated with industry stakeholder groups to strengthen the wider racing sector's response to the crisis and give a thoroughbred breeding perspective on support and resumption plans. The Covid-19 steering group, equine welfare, people, business and finance groups all included TBA representation, while weekly conference calls with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) contacts ensured everyone was fully briefed on breeding industry activity.

NEXT STEPS

The TBA will continue to take an evidence-based approach to strategy, conducting a follow-up survey of breeders in the autumn to gain further insights on the impact Covid-19 is having on the sector. The data, along with sales results, will help shape future support plans for the industry heading into 2021.

The Great British Bonus (GBB), an industry self-help initiative devised and backed by the TBA, was launched in May. It offers incentives for breeders and owners to buy and race British-bred fillies and mares under both codes of racing. Promotion of registered GBB fillies at the autumn and winter sales will be a key priority. Raising awareness of the benefits of registered GBB stock among potential purchasers to increase interest and demand in this part of the thoroughbred population will be essential to support British breeders.

The TBA is committed to keeping supporters informed during this time. A new e-bulletin email, giving regular updates on membership services and industry news was launched in June, and Covid-19 update emails will continue to be sent out when necessary. The TBA also broadcast the first of a series of webinars in June, featuring talks and presentations from key industry personnel on topical issues.

Virtual awards events will replace the annual Flat and National Hunt breeders' celebrations this summer, with online ceremonies taking place from August. Early results have been positive and the TBA will continue to host regular online events throughout the rest of this year.

Great British Bonus

The Great British Bonus (GBB) incentive scheme concentrates on British bred fillies and mares as inadequate demand and opportunity for these animals presents the biggest problem for the industry. Its aim is to make them more attractive as both sales and racing prospects and to encourage inward investment for the UK as breeders increasingly will be persuaded to use British- based stallions rather than overseas alternatives.

GBB offers the opportunity to win bonus prize money of up to £20,000 in qualifying races, divided between owner (80%) and breeder (20%), and cumulative bonus prizes.

The scheme was launched on 29 May and is supported by an extensive marketing and communications initiative that encourages the registration of eligible fillies. GBB has been given a strong brand identity, offering a focus to introduce and increase awareness of the opportunity throughout all channels of the racing industry. A dedicated website has been created that transacts registrations and gives news and information about GBB. It can be accessed at www.greatbritishbonus.co.uk.

Initially, marketing is focusing on encouraging the registration of qualifying horses. There are discounted fees available to TBA members with three stages of registration: foal, yearling and two- year-old. A campaign during July and August is principally aimed at achieving registration and familiarity with the GBB brand and the opportunities it offers.



Later, the emphasis will switch to promoting GBB-registered animals at all UK sales. A scheme manager has been appointed and will be supported by advertising/email outs/mailshots/media/social media and collateral to identify and highlight eligible fillies and mares, ensuring that prospective buyers recognise the clear advantages of buying a GBB-registered animal.

The scheme has been universally welcomed and winners have begun to flow since racing resumed following the Covid-19 lockdown. While every winner is welcome, it has been heartening to see a number of smaller owner-breeders first past the post.

Brazen Belle, owned and bred by Kevin Nicholson, won a median auction race at Beverley. *“This is very much needed to pay a few bills,”* said Nicholson. *“What a great scheme. We will be aiming for more of these races.”*

Another success was Blackberry who won at Hamilton for Simon Chappell her owner-breeder. The filly’s trainer, Bryan Smart, said: *“This scheme is fantastic for the sport. I will be advertising the benefits far and wide to my owners.”*

And Richard Hannon, who had success with Concessions for international owners, said: *“This is a fantastic initiative from the TBA to bring Great British Bonus to our industry and exactly what we need to encourage new owners, such as Sheikh Nasser, to invest in British bred fillies”.*

There has never been a time when such a scheme was more urgently required. The breeding industry was already under severe economic threat and Covid-19 will only worsen that position. The TBA believe this scheme may influence breeders to rethink decisions to reduce production, by incentivising the purchase and racing of British-bred fillies and mares that are so essential to safeguarding the future of the industry.

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Richard Hannon



The end of transition – getting ready for 2021

The UK has left the EU and is now in a transition period that ends on 31 December 2020. The government has confirmed there will be no extension to the transition, and new rules are likely to come into place for all businesses from 1 January 2021.

The British breeding industry has benefited from a tripartite agreement for more than 50 years, which has facilitated the seamless movement of horses and people between the UK, France and Ireland. The end of transition is likely to present particular and significant challenges to the thoroughbred breeding industry here and across Europe.

Exactly what the rules will be for future horse movements is undetermined, and will be shaped by the outcome of the free trade agreement talks taking place between the UK and the European Union. The tripartite agreement will cease to operate and – if no deal can be agreed as part of the trade talks – the UK will be treated as a third country by the EU, which will mean additional veterinary checks and administrative procedures to move horses across borders. The situation is further complicated by the introduction of the new EU Animal Health Law from April 2021, which brings with it further potential barriers to horse movements, especially for breeding stock.

The TBA has continued to play a leading role in the work of the Thoroughbred Industry Steering Group, led by TBA Chair Julian Richmond-Watson. The group co-ordinates detailed work by specialists in a number of policy areas – including horse movement and transport, trade and taxation, and people movement – alongside the management of engagement with government and European institutions.

The weekly dialogue with Defra will be critical through the rest of the year. Government departments and the negotiating team are all fully aware of the specific issues affecting British racing and breeding, and have been briefed on the industry-led digital solutions that can be introduced to underpin the high health and welfare status of the thoroughbred, alongside studbook recognition.

The TBA is also working with French and Irish counterparts, and the European Federation of Thoroughbred Breeders' Associations (EFTBA). EFTBA has been making representations to the European parliamentarians and Commission officials, and a European equine industry association taskforce has produced a dossier for the EU and UK negotiating teams.

It is also important for the industry to have access to the best international talent. The industry lobbied for a post-Brexit immigration system that does not adversely compromise the status of EEA and non-EEA workers already based in the UK, and one that recognises the profession as highly skilled. British racing and breeding have answered the Migration Advisory Committee's call for evidence on EEA workers in the labour market to represent these views.

Continuing to represent the sector's interests with the government, planning for the end of the transition and ensuring that breeders are thoroughly briefed on any changes to rules that may affect them will all be major areas of focus for the TBA for the remainder of the year.





Equine health and welfare strategy

During 2019, the TBA was a major contributor to veterinary research and initiatives to promote equine health and welfare, spending £455,065. The TBA's Veterinary and Equine Welfare Committee evaluates and funds veterinary research projects that benefit breeding, provides support and guidance on the surveillance and control of infectious diseases, and on all relevant veterinary and equine health and welfare matters.

The TBA supported the development of a collective racing industry equine welfare strategy. British horseracing's Horse Welfare Board's five-year strategic plan for the welfare of horses bred for racing, published in February 2020, focused on the ambition that every horse bred to race should lead – and be seen to lead – “a life well-lived”. The strategy includes: traceability for horses bred for the sport; a strong focus on safety and wellbeing; a more confident and proactive approach to communications; and the industry's biggest data project.

The TBA provided input and welcomed the plan's publication, and is now working on the implementation of its recommendations to ensure the best possible health and welfare standards across the breeding industry.

A major area of focus in 2020 will be establishing full traceability throughout the lifetime of a thoroughbred based in Great Britain – from 30-day foal notification through to retirement, breeding and alternative careers. Weatherbys is developing an E-Passport that is expected to be introduced with the 2021 foal crop.

This will encompass identification, medications and vaccinations, movement and ownership functionality to improve traceability, welfare, biosecurity and whole-herd health from cradle to grave. The vaccinations and movement elements were launched in the first half of 2020 and, in the final quarter of 2020, alongside Weatherbys, the TBA will be hosting a series of events to explain the new technology and its benefits to members, vets and others within the industry.

Other projects for 2020 include: updates to member guidance; educational courses and training materials to support breeders in making responsible choices for all the horses in their care; and a project to consolidate breeding industry data and improve overall insight.

The TBA is working with the HBLB to review and produce the industry Codes of Practice on equine infectious diseases – a voluntary set of codes used to protect against specific diseases affecting stud farms with the potential to compromise horse welfare and disrupt industry activity.

The ongoing funding of veterinary research includes a post-doctoral research project, jointly funded by the TBA, the European Breeders Fund and the HBLB entitled 'Equine host-parasite interactions on thoroughbred studs.'

In examining the relationship between the intestinal microbiome and susceptibility to parasite burdens, it is hoped that a solution will be found to address the growing problem of resistance to worming medications.

A three-year, post-doctoral research project conducted at the Royal Veterinary College and fully funded by the TBA into 'The genetics of placentation and early pregnancy loss' also continues. Its aim is to identify risk factors for early pregnancy loss so that clinicians and stud staff can make evidence-based decisions to minimise their occurrence.

The TBA has also provided funding towards a collaborative research project to produce a new vaccine to protect horses against Equine Herpes Virus 1-4, which causes abortion, respiratory, and neurological disease in young and adult horses, and which is a major welfare concern for the industry.

In addition, £50,000 per annum has also been provided towards the work of the Animal Health Trust's Equine Infectious Disease Service. Following the recently announced closure of the AHT, the TBA is working in collaboration with industry partners to ensure its vital services are not lost to the industry.

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Recruitment, retention and training initiatives

A significant amount of the TBA's income is invested into recruitment, training, retention and people welfare initiatives each year; activity in this area is overseen by the TBA's Employment and Education Committee. Its objectives are to encourage and support new entrants into the industry, to deliver professional development opportunities to breeders and employees and to provide guidance and information on best practice in stud management and people management.

A major focus this year has been to research and test an e-learning platform with the aim of launching it at the end of 2020. Co-funded by The Racing Foundation, it will allow the TBA to offer improved accessibility to training and development opportunities for breeders, employees and enthusiasts, and to reach new audiences. The platform will offer formal courses with assessment and certification, lectures and presentations, information videos and podcasts. It will, in the future, give the TBA the opportunity to provide blended educational opportunities, combining online and physical seminars, forums and courses.





During 2020, the TBA continues to support practical training for new entrants through the Entry to Stud Employment Programme, which is co-funded by The Racing Foundation and delivered in partnership with the National Stud. This course is open to anyone aged 18 or over who can demonstrate a real desire to work in the industry, and it offers an accessible entry point for applicants with little or no practical experience. Trainees who completed a residential course from October to December 2019 have been working on stud farms during the 2020 breeding season and will achieve a Level 2 Diploma in Racehorse Care - Breeding Option by the end of the season.

Recruitment is continuing for the 2020 course that begins in October. Previous trainees have come from diverse backgrounds: some had just graduated from university, while others were making a career change from, for example, teaching, law, accountancy, retail, housing, pharmacology and nursing. The objective is to provide a clear pathway for new entrants to achieve qualifications and gain skills and knowledge from entry at Level 1 through to management level training at Level 4.

From the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the TBA has provided significant business and people management support via the website.

Thanks to the Covid-19 hub, breeders have been able to access weekly updates on government support for employers as well as the TBA's specific employee training guidance necessary for breeders to comply with the TBA Covid-19 protocols for the 2020 breeding season. Access to the TBA legal adviser on employment matters has also been made available to give additional support. The TBA has also ensured that people welfare has been prominent by signposting to Racing Welfare's support line and mental health and well-being guidance. The 2020 Stud Employee Award, for which nominations have been open during this period, will highlight the dedication and hard work of staff during the pandemic.

Throughout the year, the TBA continues to collaborate with the wider racing industry on recruitment, training and retention matters. Collectively, the primary and immediate concern has been to support industry participants through career advice, financial help and wellbeing support. At the end of the year the TBA plan to survey participants to understand what the future labour and training needs are likely to be once the full impact of Covid-19 is clear.

Financials

2019 INCOME



Donations, grants and voluntary levies	£1,157,734
Charitable activities	£216,016
Other trading activities	£38,876
Investments	£38,068

2018 INCOME



Donations, grants and voluntary levies	£1,058,479
Charitable activities	£218,086
Other trading activities	£45,836
Investments	£33,906

2019 EXPENSES



Veterinary support	£455,065
Education	£497,882
Promotion of the breed	£504,696

2018 EXPENSES



Veterinary support	£473,080
Education	£479,432
Promotion of the breed	£472,670

TOTAL FUNDS

2019 → £1,632,570

2018 → £1,806,138

Board of Trustees and Chief Executive

For the year ended 31 December 2019

Due to Covid-19 and the delay of the annual general meeting all Trustees whose term of office expires in July 2020 have agreed to continue in office until the year end.

Julian Richmond-Watson
Chairman
(Term of Office July 2015 – July 2021)

Philip Newton
Deputy Chairman
(Term of Office: July 2016 – July 2020)

Tom Blain
(Term of Office: July 2019 – July 2023)

Bryan Mayoh
(Term of Office: July 2018 – July 2022)

Sam Bullard
(Term of Office: October 2016 – July 2021)

Peter Mendham
(Term of Office: July 2019 – July 2020)

James Crowhurst
(Term of Office: September 2018 – July 2023)

Ted Voute
(Term of Office: July 2019 – July 2023)

Nicholas Jones
(Term of Office: July 2016 – July 2020)

Robert Waley-Cohen
(Term of Office: July 2016 – July 2020)

Edmond Mahony
(Term of Office: January 2016 – July 2020)

Anita Wigan
(Term of Office: July 2018 – July 2022)

Claire Sheppard
Chief Executive



TBA team

Robert Davey
Bloodstock Executive

Juliet Frost
Financial Controller

Alix Jones
Membership Executive

Charlotte Lovatt
Communications Manager

Olivia May
Communications Coordinator

Victoria Murrell
Executive Secretary

Melissa Parris
Education & Welfare Executive

Caroline Turnbull
Education & Welfare Manager



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