

Wokingham Borough Council Plan 2020 - 2024

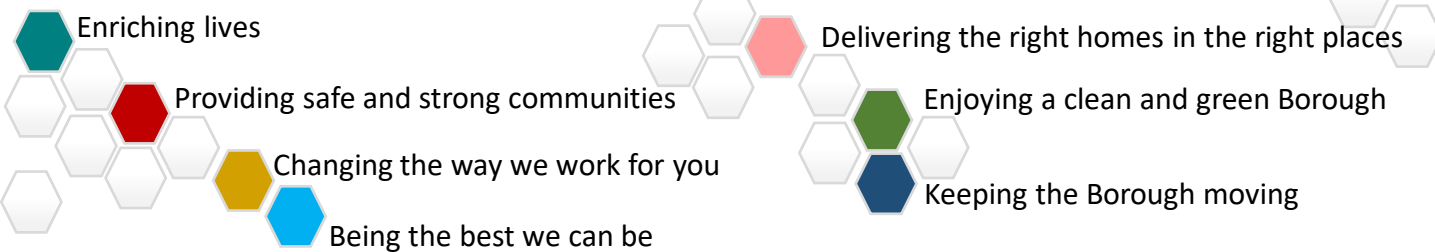
Supporting our Community Vision for Wokingham Borough to be:

**A great place to live, learn, work and grow
and a great place to do business.**



Refreshed February 2022

Our Community Vision for Wokingham Borough



Our Community Vision is for Wokingham Borough to be a great place to live, learn work and grow and a great place to do business. This Council Plan is a tool for our organisation, supporting our vision, to identify how we will deliver on these commitments to our community.

Introduction from the Chief Executive, Susan Parsonage and Leader, John Halsall

Through consultation, our residents and partners told us that they were most concerned about the impact of development upon communities and that some people face challenges with finding an affordable home. People also told us of their frustrations with traffic delays and disruptions around the Borough. Hence within this plan we have identified what we can do to ensure we are **Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places** and that we are **Keeping the Borough Moving**.

Residents also agreed with the importance of protecting our vulnerable people to ensure we are **Providing Safe and Strong Communities** and for Wokingham Borough to offer good leisure opportunities for children and adults, as well as excellent education so that we support our residents to lead happy, healthy **Enriching Lives**. To reflect this, we are increasing our focus on equality and tackling poverty with the Borough.

The impact of climate change is a pressing concern both globally and locally and we are committed to playing as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough so that we can live: **Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough** now and for future generations to come. To achieve these ambitions, we will continue to improve, **Changing the way we work for you** putting our residents and businesses at the heart of what we do, delivering a high standard of customer service whilst building resilience in our organisation and in our communities.

The Council Plan identifies our ambitions focused on **Being the Best we can be** and the steps we will take to nurture and develop colleagues across our organisation to realise these ambitions within the budget available.

We want to improve outcomes for our residents by delivering these strategic priorities together with staff and our partners. Despite the challenges we face, we are ambitious, committed to and passionate about, delivering improvements; striving for excellent and efficient services.

The Council Plan sets out what we want to achieve for each strategic priority, what we will do to get there and what success will look like. The Plan will be monitored and corporate performance measures have been developed to track our progress in delivering these strategic objectives.



Our Values

Our values help shape and guide our behaviour. By demonstrating these values, it will help us move forwards together to achieve our future ambitions for Wokingham Borough. Our values are:

Customer Focussed

Put ourselves in our customers shoes and listen, to deliver services we would like to receive.

Taking ownership

Taking responsibility for issues and address them with actions we see through to resolution. Be accountable for our service delivery in the context of our community wellbeing and Council objectives.

One team

Work jointly with our residents, colleagues, councillors and partners, across any boundaries, to ensure efficient, effective delivery on behalf of our communities.

Being ambitious

Aiming for excellence in the outcomes we pursue and the way we do things. Being forward-thinking, innovative, entrepreneurial and accepting risks where possible to do so.

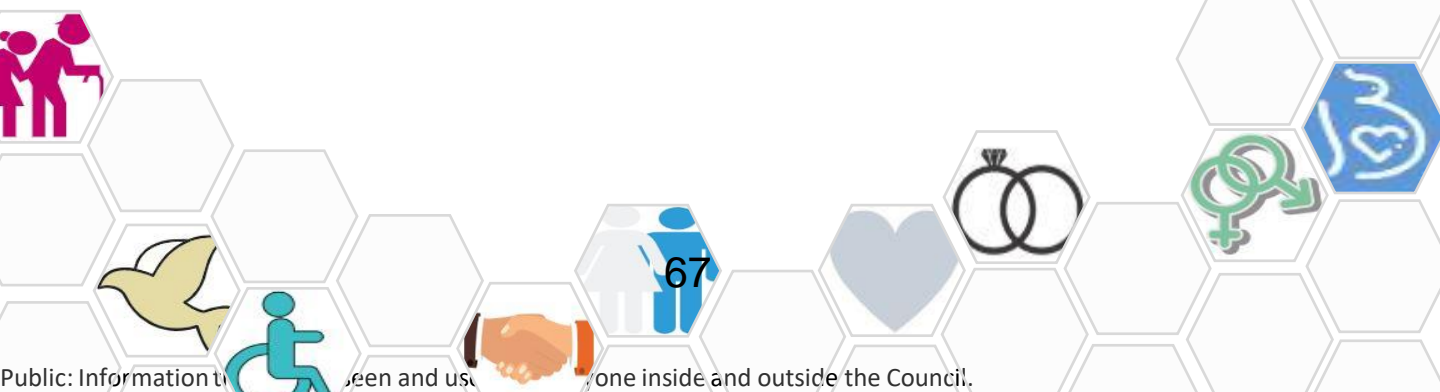
Our Commitment to Equality

Each Borough is unique in its diversity, challenges and opportunities and Wokingham is no exception.

Whilst being an affluent area with great opportunities and low levels of deprivation, there are challenges to ensure these benefits can be accessed and shared by all. Through this plan we want to achieve a more equal Borough, where everyone is respected and has access to the opportunities that the Borough has to offer. As such, we are building inclusivity as a theme to run through the Council Plan and the Council's supporting strategies.

To do this we commit to the following in all of our work and service provision:

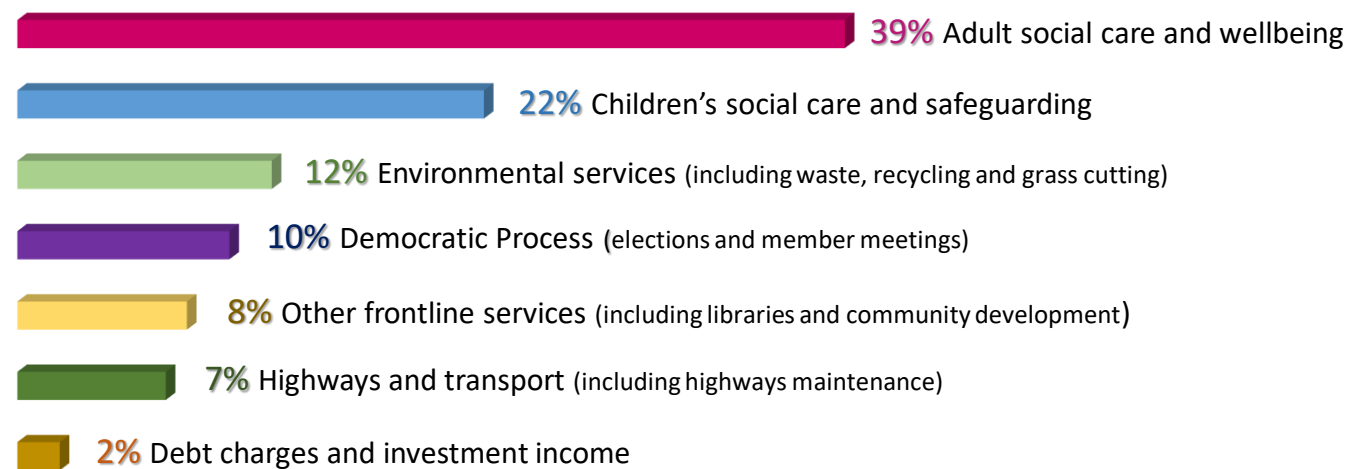
- Work with our partners to promote equality and good relations between communities and diverse groups
- Consistently strive to eliminate discrimination for reasons of a person's age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sex, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief, or socio-economic circumstances within our communities and within our workplace.
- Ensure new projects, policies, strategies, service changes and communication take account of all the needs of our users.
- Increase our understanding of the communities we serve to inform the decisions we make.
- Continue to monitor the impact of our employment policies and practices.



Our Budget

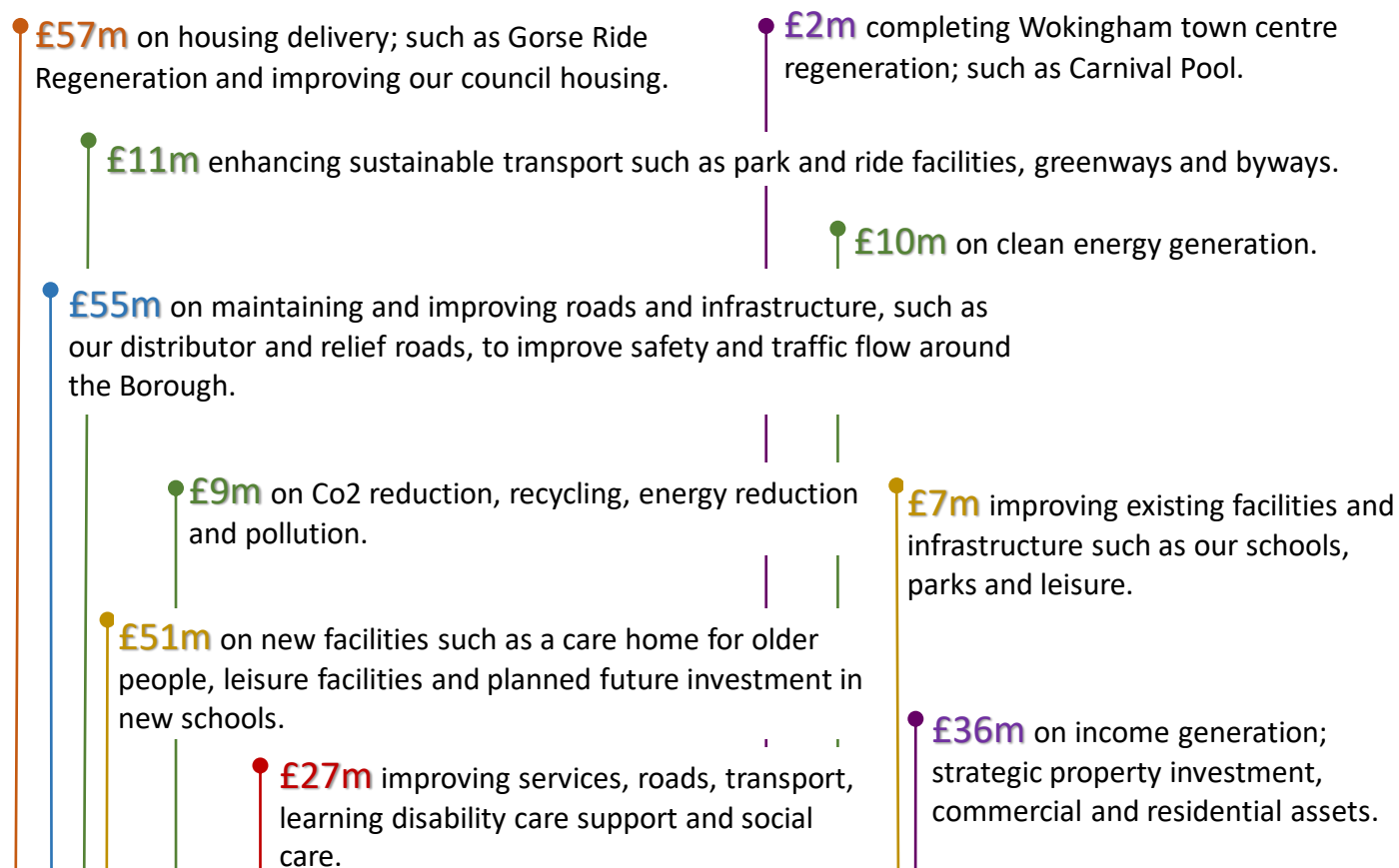
The budget represents the Council's strategies and priorities from a financial perspective. We have a duty to fulfil statutory services, such as adult social care, children's services and waste. The majority of our income is used for these statutory services and with increased demand, we continue to be innovative and diligent to safeguard those services you value the most and consider new ways of generating further income to invest back into our community.

Our £144.7m budget for the first year, 2022/23, of our Council Plan will be allocated as follows:



Our capital programme 2022-25

Some of the ways we are utilising our capital programme 2022-25 over the next three years are highlighted below. Further information about our budget for 2022/23 and future year estimates are detailed in our Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy.



Our challenges

Wokingham Borough has a growing population with many thriving communities but with an increasing proportion of residents with long term health conditions, such as dementia, and people with learning disabilities or difficulties, it is important to address and manage demand for long term care and maintain high quality services.

We will work with our partners to

- Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people.
- Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care.
- Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish.
- Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.

What we will do

- Maintain a relentless focus on safeguarding.
- Work together to shape services around the needs of the individual and deliver them in a way that empowers residents to live independent and healthy lives.
- Plan, commission and monitor high quality services that deliver value for money.
- Work with residents and providers in an inclusive manner to ensure sustainable local provision of care services and a thriving voluntary sector.
- Work with families and young people to ensure planned transitions from children to adult services.
- Work with our health partners to improve access to primary healthcare and better integrate local health and social care services.
- Work with partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and increase the resilience of local communities.

What success will look like

- Residents feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods and in the services they receive.
- Improvements in health, wellbeing and independence in the community.
- Greater access to opportunities through the voluntary sector: increasing inclusivity; reducing social isolation and preventing loneliness.
- Increased opportunities for self-support, reducing the demand for ongoing care and support.
- Wokingham Borough is the very best place for people with a learning disability to live, learn, work and feel supported.

Enriching lives

Our challenges

We are tackling health and well-being in Wokingham Borough, with a particular focus on emotional health and well-being, early intervention and prevention. Broad measures of well-being mask pockets of deprivation, health and economic need and those living in poverty. Over the last couple of years there has been an increase in the number of children, young people and adults seeking support for mental and emotional well-being support.

We will work with our partners to

- Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.
- Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone.
- Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of.
- Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.

What we will do

- Work with our partners to make the Borough a place where businesses want to invest and are supported to stay and grow: providing opportunities for our residents.
- Support and challenge all schools to provide the right environment for effective learning and good emotional well-being for pupils.
- Work with our partners to provide excellent adult education and training opportunities that meets the skills needs of our employers.
- Work across the organisation with all partners to deliver our health and well-being strategy to support residents to lead happy, healthy lives.
- Maximise opportunities for physical and social activities and make sure everyone is able to participate if they want to.
- Increase the opportunity for creativity to flourish through a vibrant arts and culture offering which is accessible to everyone.

What success will look like

- A strong local economy with continued inward investment into the Borough.
- Thriving villages and town centres offering residents and visitors a range of retail and leisure options.
- Increased educational attainment overall and a narrowing of the gap between disadvantaged children, those with protected characteristics and their peers.
- Enhanced working across all partners to reduce health inequality.
- An increase in all residents engaging in active, healthy, cultural and social opportunities.
- More local people involved in volunteering and community activities, taking pride in their neighbourhood and, where possible, looking after their own wellbeing and that of their families and neighbours.

Our challenges

We have a challenge within Wokingham Borough to manage and balance need with requirements for new housing, whilst protecting the quality of our environment and the sustainability of our existing communities. Creating places fit for the future, that are inclusive to all and have the right infrastructure in place. Ensuring that our homes are affordable, sustainable and of good quality and supporting those with specialist needs or at risk of homelessness.

We will work with our partners to

- Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future.
- Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow.
- Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment.
- Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.

What we will do

- Ensure a planned approach to house building and place shaping through master-planning and community involvement.
- Develop policies to make sure development is vibrant with the right mix of housing, employment, leisure, community uses and green infrastructure that is well connected and meets community needs.
- Ensure our existing built environment and valued green spaces are protected.
- Maximise the delivery of affordable housing through developers, social landlords and our own housing companies.
- Work closely with our partners and the voluntary sector to deliver a variety of housing options that meet the needs of vulnerable and disabled residents.
- Work with all landlords and home owners to improve the quality, efficiency and sustainability of the Borough's existing housing stock.

What success will look like

- Where possible, all new development is delivered through a planned approach minimising the impact on existing communities and protecting our valued green space.
- Local residents are supported and protected during any new development in their neighbourhood and that any essential infrastructure is delivered up front.
- New developments have their own sense of place that adds to the quality of life and sense of community for those residents living there.
- Sufficient affordable, specialist housing to meet the requirements of all those residents in priority need.

Our challenges

We have a challenge to effectively manage high volumes of traffic travelling through the Borough, to reduce congestion, deal with road works and address strategic connections. We must also balance this with supporting and enabling behaviour change in residents' travel choices and maximising the use of digital connectivity and smart city technology.

We will work with our partners to

- Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways.
- Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions.
- Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure.
- Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.

What we will do

- Ensure a strategic approach to highway investment and maintenance.
- Increase opportunities across the Borough to access public transport and use electric vehicles.
- Continue to promote and develop the MyJourney programme as a tool to help residents and visitors make sustainable transport choices.
- Work with our partners and the community to review and implement the Local Transport Plan and the walking and cycling strategy.
- Work in partnership to explore new technologies that contribute to an intelligent transport system that makes the best use of the existing road network.

What success will look like

- Less congestion on our roads and more efficient journey times across the Borough.
- Increased use of public transport, walking and cycling initiatives.
- Increased number of electric vehicle charging points.
- A well maintained road network and improved safety for all road users.
- Improved air quality.

Our challenges

To tackle climate change, achieve carbon neutrality while adapting for a growing population and seeking out value for money. There is a challenge in encouraging behaviour change around waste, recycling and transport around the Borough whilst addressing air quality and respiratory health and protecting valued spaces.

We will work with our partners to

- Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future.
- Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy.
- Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity.
- Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.

What we will do

- Deliver against our Climate Emergency Action Plan and ensure becoming carbon neutral is given due weight through all our strategies and decision making.
- Ensure our colleagues across the council and our contractors, take measures where possible to reduce carbon emissions including making our own buildings more energy efficient.
- Help and support our residents and businesses to make behavioural changes that actively address the challenges of climate change.
- Continue to tackle fly-tipping, litter, graffiti and waste generation.
- Enhance our existing green areas and valued open spaces.

What success will look like

- Residents and businesses change their behaviours to do more to tackle climate change and the Council is seen as setting a positive example.
- The Borough is recognised as a flagship authority in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change.
- A greener Borough, with more trees and a richer biodiversity with improved and more accessible, open spaces.
- Increased recycling and a reduction in general waste produced by each household.
- A more joined up walking and cycling network with more people choosing to walk, cycle or use public transport.

Our challenges

Be a smarter and more efficient organisation, developing effective and accessible digital solutions: making it easier for our customers, residents and businesses to work and communicate with us. Develop a better understanding of our communities needs and demands and build capacity for innovation across our organisation. Ensure we continually improve the delivery our statutory obligations placing our residents at the heart of everything we do.

We will work with our partners to

- Be relentlessly customer focussed.
- Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers.
- Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough.
- Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.

What we will do

- Strengthen our understanding of current and future needs and demand so that we can plan, design and deliver the best outcomes for all our residents.
- Listen to what our communities are telling us and use this feedback to shape service delivery, challenge how we do business and manage expectations in an open and honest way.
- Develop an inclusive service delivery approach, in a way that promotes the independence of residents, and harnesses the digital opportunities available.
- Work in partnership to deliver community led solutions that address the issues that matter most to our residents.
- Develop a proactive approach with our partners in communicating, celebrating our shared success and promoting how the community can get involved.
- Be ambitious in all that we do, ensuring we have the right resource and governance to allow us to deliver at pace and manage demand.

What success will look like

- A customer-centred way of working that is responsive to the needs of our communities, is built on a foundation of customer engagement and results in improved satisfaction levels.
- A community led approach to meeting the needs of our residents, that is focused on the right outcome, delivered in the right way at the right time.
- Communication and feedback that encourages engagement with residents, businesses and partners in an inclusive and informative way.
- Thinking differently about how to manage the needs of our community, using a demand management approach to service delivery, with high ambition and desire to continuously improve all that we do.
- Effective use of digital technology, underpinning the very core of our organisation, that drives innovative new ways of working, helps to understand how things will change in the future and inform decision making.

Be the best we can be

Our challenges

Strive to be the best we can be as service provider, an enabler, a partner, an employer and as colleagues. Be innovative and ambitious, harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of all our colleagues, in an inclusive manner, be recognised nationally and locally as an excellent organisation and a great place to work. Be clear with our residents of our ambition and vision for the Borough and its place in the wider Berkshire community.

We will work with our partners to

- Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice.
- Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working.
- Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business.
- Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient.
- Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough.
- Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.

What we will do

- Place our shared vision for the Borough at the centre of the Council's plans and underpinning strategies.
- Develop a People Strategy that is centred around recognition and development of all colleagues across the Council.
- Nurture our colleagues and encourage them to be the best they can be, through opportunities to learn and develop.
- Strengthen our scrutiny approach to ensure we learn from our experiences, consider risks and make improvements.
- Create a commercial mind-set in the council, that promotes the ability to deliver services differently, demands innovation and ensures we are able to maximise our assets for the benefit of our communities and to deliver financial sustainability.
- Be assertive and robust in our approach to the financial challenges, by developing our investment strategy, enhancing commissioning and contract management, seeking additional investment and grant funding to realise our ambitions.
- Develop a communication, engagement and marketing strategy that will promote the Borough and communicate the work of the council to residents and beyond.
- Develop a corporate strategy function that enables a golden thread to run down from our shared vision, ensuring our strategies, policies and plans are focused to deliver what matters most to our residents and the Borough.

What success will look like

- Colleagues are passionate about what they do and proud to work at our organisation, they understand our goals and their role in helping us to achieve them.
- All colleagues are given the support and opportunities to develop and grow and, where possible, are able to follow a career path that supports their passion and ambition.
- We will have a proportionate approach to risk that encourages innovation whilst ensuring successful delivery.
- A forward thinking, innovative approach to organisational planning and delivery, with a strong commercial approach to everything that we do.
- A council wide approach to the financial challenges and solutions, increased grant contribution to support service delivery, and shared expertise in contract management across the organisation.

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