VIADUCT

February 2023

Editor's Letter

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Hello,

Already the second month of the year is here. St Valentine's Day and Shrove Tuesday are certainly two days to look forward to, but when you dip into Viaduct, you'll find there is plenty going on in Somerton as usual.

The Laburnum residents have much to excite and entertain them, plus there are several very inetesting talks coming up. The Women's Institute guest speaker will recall his experience of life with his family in Afghanistan, the History Society will discover the history of the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and the Gardeners' Club will learn how to care for shrubs and trees.

The library is introducing a Dad's Club and, looking forward to wamer days, Somerstock has two days of rocking good fun planned. This is just a taster of what's in store, so I shall detain you no longer... read on.

Paula

Editor, Viaduct

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News from your town council

Meeting	Date	Time	Venue
Full Council (Planning if required at 6.30pm)	14 February 2023	7.00pm	Edgar Hall
Planning if required	28 February 2023	6.30pm	Edgar Hall

Somerton Town Council welcomes our new Town Clerk, Laura Bolter, who will join us on 6 February 2023.

Crowning King Charles III

Somerton Town Council invite representatives from local clubs and organisations, as well as members of the public, to attend a meeting at the Edgar Hall. This will take place on Wednesday 8 February 2023 at 7.00pm in the conference room (located upstairs) and its purpose is to plan how we will celebrate the Coronation of our King, Charles III and his Queen Consort, Camilla on Saturday 6 May 2023. The celebrations will take place from 6 to 8 May 2023. Please take part in the planning of this special occasion which we hope will be as successful as our events for our dear late Queen Elizabeth's II Platinum Jubilee. If you'd like to know more, please contact Mo Fletcher on 07718 929198 or mo.fletcher@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

Somerton Town's future

We are approaching the opening of the Town Plan Questionnaire on Survey Monkey which will be accessible from 28 February. Please log on at somerton-cp.uk/ or scan the QR code below and have your say to help formulate the Somerton Town Plan 2023 – 2028. Please note that the survey will only be accessible for three weeks, until 20 March 2023.

If you do not have digital access to complete the survey online, drop-in sessions will be available in Somerton Library between 2.00pm and 4.00pm on 28 February, 3 March, 7 March,10 March, 14 March and 17 March 2023 where volunteers will be able to help you.

Councillor Mo Fletcher and helpers will also visit Laburnum Drive, and both Parent and Toddler Groups. Some home visits may be possible – please contact Mo Fletcher on 07718 920198.

Following the survey, the Town Plan team will report the findings back to the community at a Public Meeting and via the website.

News from your town council

Citizen's Advice Bureau

The library will be open as a Citizen's Advice Bureau between 10.00am and 1.30pm every Monday morning, commencing 20 February 2023. During this period the library will only be used as a CAB and not as a library.

Your council and community need you

Following the receipt of two resignations during January 2023 the council are looking for two new councillors.

What do councillors do?
Local councillors are the champions of the community who invest time in local projects and issues to the benefit of residents and the neighbourhood. Councillors attend to local needs of residents, local groups and businesses, make decisions on local services, collaborate with district and borough councils to adhere to local needs, and progress vital projects to invest in the future of the community.

What do councils do?
Councils lead on community services such as allotments, footpaths, public seating and litter bins, but also larger projects such as the running of local transport, leisure services, youth services and climate change initiatives. These activities are funded by a local tax, called a precept which is determined by the council.

How long does it take?
Councillors put aside on average, one to three hours a week for council work. Council work often includes attending meetings, engaging with residents, and speaking to local groups and bodies on behalf of the council.

Can I stand for election?
You must be:

- A British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, or the European Union
- 18 years of age or older
- Live in an area that is served by the local council

For further information please contact the Town Clerk at town.clerk@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk or by calling 01458 272236.

News from your town council

SID's been stolen

On the night of 4 November 2022, the Speed Indicator Device at Langport road was stolen. The council are now replacing this device and purchasing another, to be funded by an insurance claim and the town council. The council have also applied for a grant from Avon and Somerset Police Road Safety Trust. The council now have three devices. Two will be permanently sited at Sutton Road and Langport Road, while the third is a mobile unit starting in in West Street and being moved as necessary.

The Queen's Bench

A new bench funded by Somerset District Council's Market Town Investment Group, has been installed in Market Square to commemorate the life of our late Queen Elizabeth II. The design was chosen to represent the personality and tranquil qualities of our late Queen.

Freddy the Frog has a big appetite

Drop in at Etsome Memorial Park and you'll find Freddy the Frog. He's there to encourage children to throw litter away instead of leaving it in the park. We hope his friendly face will add a little bit of fun for children when they dispose of their litter.

News round-up

The new pedestrian crossing in Langport Road is still waiting for lights to be connected. The town council are following this up and hope they'll be installed soon.

If you discover any dog mess in town, you can report it (amongst many other concerns) by calling the South Somerset District Council on 01935 462462 or going online at southsomerset.gov.uk/report-it. The council will investigate areas where repeated fouling occurs or instances where known individuals are allowing their dogs to foul in a public area.

The new Unitary Authority will come into affect from 1 April 2023. For more information on this, go to newsomersetcouncil.org.uk.

Again, we'd like to thank the volunteers of the Lights Brigade for their amazing displays in 2022. Sadly, stalwart Robin is leaving, so another volunteer electrician is needed. Please call Mo Fletcher on 07718 929198 or email mo.fletcher@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

Finally, if you'd like to contact us about anything in this report, or in general, you can call 01458 272236 or email Lydia at clerk.assistant@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk, Claire at office@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk or Steph at deputy.clerk@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk. We work part time hours and we endeavour to respond as promptly as possible.

News from around town

Get the most from your library

The library has much to offer in 2023 including a new Dads' Club which starts on 11 February from 10.30am to 12.30pm and then continues every second Saturday in the month. It's an opportunity to spend time with your children, encourage them to read and meet other like-minded dads. It might also give mum a chance to relish a cup of coffee at home that's still hot!

There's also a Childrens's Half Term Craft Event on Friday 17 February from 10.30am to 1.00pm. Just pop along anytime and join in the fun – all materials are provided.

For a full list of all our services and activities, go to somertonlibrary.com.

Citizens Advice At Somerton Library

From 20th February 2023

Every Monday 10.00am – 1.30pm

Need help now? Free phone adviceline:

0808 278 7842 or visit our website www.citizensadvicesouthsomerset.org.uk

citizens advice South Somerset

With thanks to Somerton Town Council and the Somerton Library Trust for their support

Monday	Closed all day		
Tuesday	Closed am		2.00pm to 5.00pm
Wednesday	10.00am to 1.00pm		Closed pm
Thursday	10.00am to 1.00pm		2.00pm to 5.00pm
Friday	10.00am to 1.00pm		2.00pm to 5.00pm
Saturday	10.00am to 1.00pm		Closed pm

Reflections on the ordinary

As the 2022 community project comes to a close with the final day of 'Flock Together' on Saturday 4 February, ACEarts will be launching 'In Stitches' for 2023. Participants will need no experience to take part in this community project which will run until November culminating in a public participation artwork which will be displayed as part of the 2024 exhibition programme. Further details are available on our website acearts.co.uk and in the gallery.

11 February sees the start of Shared Moments, an exhibition by local artist Kay Lewis-Bell comprising drawings, paintings and words reflecting memories of the ordinary. As with all of ACEarts exhibitions, entry is free to all and is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10.00am until 5.00pm. Alongside the 2023 programme, we will be holding workshops, talks and other events to complement the exhibitions throughout the year, all details of will be available via our monthly emails, on our website and in the gallery.

News from around town

Keep fit and well in the new year

It is vital to keep moving safely this winter. If for any reason you can't get out, there's no need to miss out on your favourite exercise class – you can join in from the comfort of your own home with Age UK Somerset's online classes. Specially designed for people over 60, choose from Yoga, Tai Chi and Pilates.

You can join in at ageuksomerset.org.uk/onlineexercisesessions. And for more information, call 01823 345626 or email ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk.

Historic high fliers

Somerton History Society is meeting on Thursday 23 February 2023. Our meeting this month will be held in the Parish Rooms, with doors opening at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. Our speaker this month will be Graham Mottram and his talk is entitled ' A Short History of Naval Aviation'. There is no charge for members but there is a £2 charge per guest.

Kick off the new year with a good deed

Somerton Town Youth Football Club was established in 2001 to provide youth football activities within Somerton and the surrounding area for youngsters aged four to sixteen years old. The club aims to provide fun, safe and inclusive football to all young people and it currently supports around 160 youth players across eleven teams and a soccer school.

Volunteers are needed to help administer the club. No football knowledge is required. The roles are a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a youth secretary and committee members.

If you have some spare time and would like to make a difference to the lives of young people within our community, please email the secretaries Justin and Mark at somertonyfcsecretary@hotmail.com.

News from around town

Keeping in the know

Welcome to the
Somerton Community Website

To all Somerton organisations, societies and clubs – do you know that you can put your events on the Somerton Community Website free of charge? The address is somerton.co.uk and the organisers are very keen to have listings of any meetings and upcoming events with all the information you can give to keep people of Somerton up to date of what's going on in town. Please email your events to somerton@somerton.co.uk and help keep local people informed.

Trees, shrubs and flowers

Somerton Gardeners' Club is going from strength to strength. The next meeting is on Wednesday 8 February at 7.30 pm in the Edgar Hall. The speaker will be David Usher who will talk about the Care and Management of Trees and Shrubs, particularly relevant as the season moves on from winter and into spring.

Each month there is a friendly competition for members. The February competition is for a red flower arrangement, remembering that Valentine's Day is just around the corner. You don't have to be an expert to enjoy the meetings. The club is always pleased to welcome new faces, as visitors or members so why not go along and see what it's all about.

Tales from Afghanistan

Somerton WI's next meeting is on Tuesday 21 February at 2.30 pm in the Parish Rooms in the Market Square. John England spent several years working in Afghanistan, before the recent dramatic events in the country. He will be talking to us about his experiences, and those of his family who were there with him.

New members are always welcome new members or you can come as a visitor to meet people and see if you enjoy the company. Members look forward to seeing you.

Photographs: flowers courtesy Glennia, Afghans courtesy United Nations

News from around town

Let them entertain you

The coach for Charity Theatre Trips to Bristol Hippodrome picks up at 5.00pm in Curry Rivel, then Langport, Somerton and either Street/Glastonbury/Wells or Keinton Mandeville/Shepton Mallet – please call for details.

Recent additions to the programme are Lion King, Peter Pan Pantomime and Life of Pi, which features puppetry and magic and has been much praised by folk who have already seen it.

We have availability on all of the listings, although Fisherman's Friends is nearly sold out; no surprise there. Payment is usually due two months before the performance, but the earlier you book the better your seats. All profits support British Red Cross. For more information go to charitytheatretrips.com or telephone 01458 273085.

2 Mar 23	Bourne's Sleeping Beauty £45/£65
21 Mar 23	The Commitments £51
30 Mar 23	The King and I £53/£62
4 May 23	Fisherman's Friends £54
25 May 23	Lion King £65
11 Jul 23	Strictly Ballroom £37/£52
27 Sep 23	Charlie & The Chocolate Factory £62/£70
6 Dec 23	Peter Pan Pantomime £40
17 Jan 24	Life of Pi (play) £40/£51

Frogs and toads are counting on you

Somerset Wildlife Trust has recently announced its latest citizen science project, The Frog & Toad Spawn Count, which is running until 31 March 2023.

This is the second year the project has run, and it follows on from a successful pilot in 2022. The project is all about encouraging the public to help collect important data on the location of breeding frogs and toads across Somerset by heading outside and looking out for frog and toad spawn in local ponds.

Frogs and toads are "indicator species", which means they are one of the first species to be affected by the degradation of the environment and the impacts of climate change. This means that monitoring their populations and breeding habits can help us look after our ponds, rivers, and other aquatic habitats.

It's easy to get involved in the Frog & Toad Spawn Count, and it's a great opportunity to get the family outside and beat the January blues – all you have to do is go online at somersetwildlife.org and download a free welcome pack which tells you all you need to know about Somerset's frogs and toads.

Photograph courtesy Alan Price

News from around town

More money-saving hacks

Did you hit the High Street sales in January? Or did you shop from the comfort of home? Too tempting isn't it? But there is a price to pay. The rise of fast fashion by such companies as Boohoo, Primark and ASOS has come at an enormous cost to the planet and our pockets. In 2018, the clothing thrown away in the UK added up to 300,000 tonnes – equivalent to the weight of almost 30 Eiffel Towers. And that does not include all the packaging.

Make material changes

- Buy less: the average person in the UK is buying 60% more clothing than 20 years ago.
- Buy second-hand: use charity shops, car boot sales, eBay, Vinted.
- Buy quality rather than quantity. This does not always mean designer labels.
- Rent or borrow a costume for that special event.
- Repair and up-cycle or re-purpose. Old T-shirts and socks make great polishers. Pillow cases make great hankerchiefs, worn towels can be made into dishcloths.
- Look after your clothes, wash them less frequently at lower temperatures.
- Audit your wardrobe. Be honest, does it still fit? Will you wear the prom dress again? Do you need that many pairs of jeans?

Mend and save

We have all become so used to throwing away that jumper with a hole or socks where toes poke through, or broken zips, or split seams after Xmas binges. It is often possible to fix these garments and save a lot of money. The art of mending has almost been lost. If you cannot do it ask someone who can.

Create your own fashion

Patchwork is an ideal way to use up all those old clothes. Perhaps join a craft or sewing group, a lovely sociable way to learn a new skill. Patchwork clothes are all the fashion now.

Your purse, your decision

It is the big fast fashion companies, most of the Haute Couture and fashion designer industries who practice proliferate consumerism and need to change their practices the most. The rest of us need to change or tweak just a few things in our buying habits to make a vast effect on the fashion industry and our purses.

News from around town

Rock on summertime

Somerstock is a family friendly music festival in the heart of Somerset. 2023 sees the introduction of a Friday night of music on the 7 July, before a full day of bands and family fun on Saturday 8 July. The festival site is on the edge of Somerton, with on-site parking and camping available.

Dance and soul band Area 52 will headline the Friday evening entertainment which runs from 6.00pm to 11.00pm, with food stalls and bar. Al O'Kane opens the evening with fiery alt/folk-rock, followed by up-beat covers from Not Like The Others and great new music from Young Martyrs.

Headlining on Saturday, rock legends The Blockheads will be joined by 13 other live bands, providing continuous music from 1.00pm to 11.30pm over three stages with the evening's entertainment rounded off by a silent disco. There will also be children's activities, retail stalls, food stalls and bars.

Joining The Blockheads on the outdoor stages will be Tom and the Clementynes who delighted festival goers in 2019, Matt Owens (formerly of Noah and the Whale) with the Delusional Vanity Project, upbeat country folk from the Jamestown Brothers, stunning rock covers from The Classic Rock Revival, Ska from the Decatonics and high energy from Nick Parker and the False Alarms – once described as 'A British Arcade Fire'. The festival also includes soul from the Charlie Miller Band, reggae from the South West's Bare Foot Bandit and acoustic and alternative acts as well as another famous silent disco.

There is a wide range of ticketing options, with a great value for money family ticket (children under 12 go free). Check the festival website somerstock.co.uk for all the details, to buy tickets or to ask us any questions.

All photography by kind permission of Victoria Welton

Have your say

More fun for 2023

The Laburnum Drive Community Centre Committee are looking forward to another fun-packed year with you. There are monthly coach trips and events planned as well as the usual breakfasts and bacon butty mornings. For a flutter and conversation, why not join the weekly Bingo? On 8 February there's a coach trip to Shepton Mallet and Haskins Retail Centre. Departure is 11.15am and return to Somerton by 4.00pm. The cost is £8 and there'll be fish and chips for lunch. On 28 February there's a Bring and Buy in the Hall at 10.00am. For more information, see the noticeboard in the Hall or call 01458 272620.

Singing for someone's supper

As a result of generous donations at their Christmas concert, Mid Wessex Singers were able to give a £500 cheque to the Lord's Larder, and this was presented by chairman Pauline Stephens to the Gateway Church in Yeovil. They were delighted, as it enables them to buy what is needed and is not always donated. It gives flexibility, and £500 will make quite a difference.

Somerset Sight are looking for volunteers

People are needed to befriend visually impaired people in Somerton. You can help someone remain independent and overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation. Volunteers find this a most satisfying and rewarding role where they meet friendly and interesting people. When you join, you'll be fully trained and carefully matched with the person you are helping. The role involves regular home visits and trips out.

If you'd like to put yourself forward, or find out more, call Somerset Sight on 01823 333818 or email admin@somersetsight.org.uk.

Have your say

Try the new Memory Café

Somerton Good Neighbour Volunteers are delighted to be setting up a Memory Café to support people in Somerton living with dementia, as well as their family and carers. Meetings will be held in the West Street Church Hall on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. The next meeting will be on Thursday 2 February 2023.

There will be an opportunity to meet other people with memory problems, join in some activities and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. Come along for an afternoon of fun.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in joining us, please contact Lead Coordinator Annette Sparks on 01458 258947 or email annettes2853@gmail.com.

A heart-felt thank you

Somerton residents are amongst many in Somerset who are hosting Ukrainian refugees under the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme. One example is Kateryna, an artist and art teacher who, after fleeing her homeland with her daughter, is being hosted by Graham and Jean Taylor who live in Pinewood. Katia and her daughter Elizabeth are extremely grateful for the warmth of welcome they have received from the Somerton community in general and the St. Michael's Church community in particular. As a gesture from her heart Katia has painted a beautiful icon of St. Michael and gifted it to the Church at a service on Sunday morning 4 December 2022. For now, mother and daughter are safe, but other family members remain in Ukraine. Like many in Churches and elsewhere across our land we pray for the war and the violence to end and for peace to be restored.

Let's not litter

A local resident of Somerton has written to me, the editor, about the litter problem in Somerton. Apparently he spent around half an hour with a litter picker and large black bag clearing an area around the bench on Etsome Road, opposite Cox's Motors. It seems to be a recurring problem where he and his wife are frequently out and about picking up litter. You can report litter to the council online at southsomerset.gov.uk/services/environmental-services/horticulture-and-street-cleaning/report-litter/ or by calling 0300 123 2224.

Local clubs and activities

If any of the details for the current list are incorrect or you would like to be added to the list, please email viaduct@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

GROUP	CONTACT NAME	MEETING PLACE	MEETING TIME	EMAIL/WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Ageing Well	Age UK somerset	Parish Rooms, booking required for a place	Monday, Thursday and Friday	ageingwell@ageuksomerset.org.uk for details and to book a place	01823 345626
Archies Extra	Alex Judith	Sports Ground, Gassons Lane by MUGA	Thurs 7.30-9.30pm 11 to 18 year olds		01458 272047 01458 273079
Flexercise		Buttercross Surgery	Fridays 2.30-3.30pm		
Friendship Club	Mo Fletcher	Somerton Sports Club	Second Thursday of the month 10.30am	fletcher080@btinternet.com	01458 274631
Health Walks	Mo Fletcher	Somerton Library	First and third Thursday of the month 11.30am	fletcher080@btinternet.com	01458 274631
Martial Arts Self Defence	Dan Palmer	Village Hall, High Ham, Langport TA10 9DA	Weds 7.00-8.00pm Kids and Adults Thurs 5.00-6.00pm and 6.00-7.00pm Kids	info@realitymasd.co.uk	07484 849157
Mid Wessex Singers	Sheena Smith	West Street Church Hall	Tuesday 7.15-9.00pm	info@midwessexsingers.co.uk www.midwessexsingers.co.uk	07768 704883
Rugby Club	Gary Saunders & Steve Benn under 18s & 15s	Eirian Williams Memorial Pitch	Tues and Thurs 7.00pm		07870 861731 07919 153205
Scottish Country Dancing	Anita Wilson	Ash Village Hall	Wednesday 7.30-9.30pm	anitaandjim22@gmail.com	01460 929383
Somerton Bridge Club	Joan Davies, Jim Dawson	West Street Church Hall	Thursday 7.00pm	joandavies15@rocketmail.com	01458 272418 01458 251228
Somerton and District Bowls Club	Peter Jones	Sports Ground, Gassons Lane	Tuesday 5.45pm Friday 2.00pm	somertonbowlsclub.co.uk	01458 224212
Somerton Gardeners' Club	Pauline Saunders	Edgar Hall £3 for visitors	Second Wednesday of the month 7.30pm	somertongardenersclub@gmail.com somertongc.com	01458 272769
Somerton Group of Artists	Mandy McAllen	Parish Rooms, Market Square, Somerton	Second Wedsnesday of the month 7.30pm £5 includes tea or coffee	i_dissagree@hotmail.com	
Somerton History Society	Joan Banbury	Parish Rooms, Market Square, Somerton	Fourth Thursday of the month 7.30pm	j.banbury@mypostoffice.co.uk	

Local clubs and activities

If any of the details for the current list are incorrect or you would like to be added to the list, please email viaduct@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk.

GROUP	CONTACT NAME	MEETING PLACE	MEETING TIME	EMAIL/WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Somerton Music & Arts Festival	Jon Sackett	Parish Rooms, Market Square, Somerton	One committee meeting a month at 7.30pm - email for dates	somertonartsfestival.co.uk hello@somertonartsfestival.co.uk	07928 508700
Somerton Probus Club	Derek Long	Somerton Sports Club	Last Wednesday of the month 11.30am for 12.00noon start	long.derek1946@gmail.com	01458 274038
Somerton Runners	Keith Brackstone	Somerton Recreation Ground hardstanding by 5-a-side football pitch	Tuesday 6.00pm	coachkeith53@gmail.com	07999 511366
Somerton Tennis Club	Membership Secretary	Somerton Tennis Club, Somerton Sports Ground, Gassons Lane TA11 6HS		somerton.tennisclub@gmail.com	01458 396006
Somerton Town FC	Jason Burton-Tuttiett	Somerton Recreation Ground by The Sports Club (October we move to Huish School 3G until spring)	Tuesday 6.30pm	jasonb52s@yahoo.com	07825 180506
Somerton Town Youth FC	Dave Walton	Recreation Ground	Various times, please contact for details	djwalton79@hotmail.com	07476 206224
Somerton u3a	Marilyn Muffett	Various venues and Edgar Hall fourth Friday of month 10.00am	40 different groups meet at various times - details online	Full information including speakers at u3asites.org.uk/somerton/groups	01458 899773 07736 425426
Treacle Eater Clog (North-West style Morris dance with side band)	Jadi	Rimpton Village Hall BA22 8AH (car share available)	Mondays 7.30-9.30pm Beginners welcome	secretary@treacleeaterclog.org	
Tai Chi	Jacqui	Parish Rooms, Somerton	Tuesday 9.30-10.30am Thurs 9.30-10.30am £20 for four weeks		01458 270258
Wessex Junior Youth Club	Clive and Sara Dyer	Wessex Rooms, Broad St, Somerton TA11 7ND	Thursday 6.00pm to 7.30pm £1 entry, free first night for new members	sarad53@hotmail.com	01458 273655
Womens' Institute	Sue Long Pauline Saunders	Parish Rooms	Third Tuesday of the month 2.30pm		01458 274038 01458 272769

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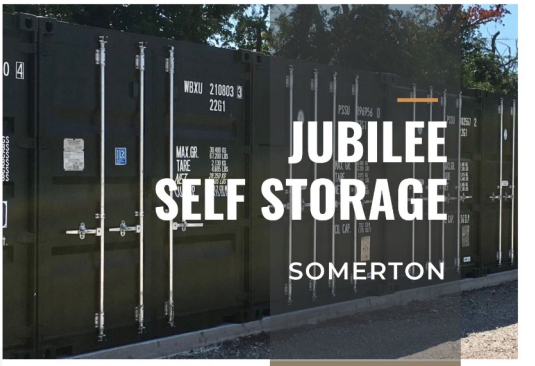

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