



CHURCHGATE AREA ASSOCIATION

Established 2002

NEWSLETTER

Number 77

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www.churchgateassoc.org.uk

The CAA promotes the interests of all residents, businesses and property owners, not only in Churchgate Street, but also in the general area of all those streets that lead directly off it.

Editor: Nick Law.

For future articles, comments, etc. please contact nicklaw1@hotmail.com

SOCIAL EVENING

Friday 19th April 2024, 7.00pm at the Unitarian Meeting House

Come and hear our own, our very own, Steve Jones, who will regale us for a second time with his inimitable graphic humour. Steve's talk is entitled **Ephemeral Art**, described by Steve as 'covering everything from theatre to pavement pictures, sand castles, Caravaggio, Hitler and spacecraft ... so hold on to your seats!'

Our upmarket wine and nibbles will be served as usual afterwards.
Free to CAA members. New members can join for £5 on the door.

Ephemeral art

Nothing lasts forever (much as we might wish or pretend otherwise). In the case of artworks, knowing their fragility can heighten their impact. This talk will touch on objects that have disappeared, are in the process of being lost, or which are intended to be ephemeral in the original meaning of the Greek *ephemeros*: "lasting only one day".



*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

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### **Featuring the shops and businesses in the Grid**

**Your CAA committee has decided to feature all the shops and businesses in the Grid who are members of the Association, and we start this month with featuring The Cheese Hole in Hatter Street which gives excellent service.**

**We have a very wide variety of businesses and shops in our area, and it is up to us to use them to keep them viable. They are vital to the area as, without them, there would be much less footfall and the place would seem dead - we love and thrive on a vibrant, multi-faceted place in which to live.**

**I urge any business or shop that wishes to be featured in the CAA newsletters to sign up as members as soon as possible - it must worth £5.00 a year to be featured in our newsletter which is distributed to over 600 houses.**

**Please contact me at the address on the last page.**

*Vivien Gainsborough Foot*

## A New Police Officer for the Town Centre

Here is our splendid new Police Officer, Timothy Bond, in his Custodian (helmet). I met him for coffee in January to hear his thoughts on the new policing arrangements in Bury town centre.



Tim has worked for the Response Team and the Pro-active Team for the West Suffolk area for 15 years, but this is the first time

he has actively patrolled the town centre on foot. He is a local lad, and he is keen to keep Bury St. Edmunds as special as it now is and to build relationships across the town. He intends to show himself in the town centre as much as possible, supported by Inspector Beeby and two PCSOs and will work 7 days out of 10. During that time there will be 7 officers on the beat for the area, three for the villages and 4 for the town. This is now called the Community Policing Team which has replaced the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Constable Bond is doing his best to keep patrolling on foot so as not to have to drive and will particularly patrol the area outside Poundland and the bench near Harriets Tea Rooms. He will keep in close contact with Bury Drop In and will focus on anti-social behaviour and shoplifting.

He asked me to give our members his email address and urged everyone to be in touch if there are problems or particular problem areas.

His email is:

[timothy.bond@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:timothy.bond@suffolk.pnn.police.uk).

Telephone: 101

He is hoping to attend our next Social on 19 April so that our members can meet him.

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### **The Chief Constable of Suffolk (Rachel Kearton) says:**

*Suffolk's new police operating model went live on Monday 4 December with the aim to strengthen community links with the public, whilst also ensuring the force continues to provide the best possible policing service for the public. This new operating model allows us to use our finite resources in the most effective way and will ensure that our officers are where people need them to be, when they are needed most.*

### **Area Commander (West) Superintendent Mark Karney says:**

*Having recently returned to the west as Area Commander I am really excited to see the early benefits of our new County Policing Command model. Our bigger Response Investigation Teams are getting to our demands for service more quickly, and the increased capacity that the bigger teams provide is allowing us to spend more time delivering quality investigations, and targeting those that are most likely to cause our communities harm.*

*In the first few weeks of the new model, we have seen some great results, with several key arrests of people involved in burglary,*

*thefts, and drugs supply. The connections we are making are helping us capture, and understand, the community-based intelligence that is so helpful to us and pursue those that target vulnerability.*

*We know that criminals seek to exploit the opportunities that darkness provides them, so my teams are making sure that we visit those premises that may be at risk from such crimes. We are offering specific crime prevention advice where needed, but also working with business and property owners,*

*looking at ways they can implement sustainable design-based crime prevention.*

*A key priority for me as we move into the new year is to build confidence within all our communities. My teams will be seeking out and listening to your concerns, then working incredibly hard to demonstrate what we have done to find the right policing solution to these.*

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## **What is a Business Improvement District?**

I know it's a bit of a cliché but I wouldn't mind a pound for every time I have been asked this question since I took up my role as Chief Executive of what was originally BID4Bury, but what has been for over 12 years now, the Our Bury St Edmunds BID.

BIDs originated in North America towards the end of the last century and legislation was put before Parliament in 2004 to enable them to appear in England and Wales.

The Bury St Edmunds version went live in April 2010.

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, this year there were 245 BIDs in England and in Suffolk we are one of 5, with the others being in Lowestoft, Felixstowe, Ipswich and Newmarket.

A BID enables businesses within an identified specified area to agree to pay a fee (a proportion of their rateable value), to a non for profit independent company, who then spend that money to provide improvements/benefits for the businesses that most could not afford on their own.

In Bury the current charge is 2% of the rateable value of any business whose premises have a rateable value of over £10K and which is in what most of us would recognise as the town centre.

A ballot of all eligible businesses has to take place to create a BID and this will happen if over half of the businesses who vote want a BID to be created.

Thereafter, every 5 years the membership is balloted again to see if they want the BID to continue.

In our town centre this means around 400 business premises (including those owned by West Suffolk Council who pay a levy for their buildings and car parks) pay this levy and generate over £400,000 annually and this is reinvested into the town centre.

I consider it a privilege to be both a resident within the Churchgate Area and to play an important role in the vitality of our town centre, which continues to be a thriving and flourishing retail and visitor centre.

I arrived in post in February 2011 and during these past 13 years I have witnessed considerable change, endured/enjoyed a variety of challenges, experienced a financial crisis, a national pandemic and a consumer cost of living crisis, so it's fair to say the role is not boring! As in my previous career in Policing, the job is varied, interesting and requires a variety of attributes including communication, negotiation, people management and

problem solving skills. A good dose of patience is also required and periodically I find myself a little short of this particular quality!

The purpose of a BID is to improve the trading environment for its members. Currently our main focus is on four key objectives which are Enhancing the Visitor Experience, Marketing, Business Support and Making the town Greener.

We deliver a variety of activities and services either alone or with partners under these categories including the Spring Fayre, Food & Drink Festival and Christmas Lights Event. We give funding to Bury in Bloom to provide the town centre public realm floral displays, promptly remove graffiti and fully fund the Christmas Lights.

We unashamedly promote Bury as a visitor destination, including emphasising the fabulous quality and variety of independent businesses we have and our burgeoning reputation as the Foodie Capital of Suffolk.

Recently under our official tourism brand for the town, Bury St Edmunds & Beyond, we have promoted digital campaigns about the Dog Friendliness of the town (recently voted the best in England) and the towns links with the USAF during WWII.

We work closely with the Town Tour Guides and the Rickshaw/Eco Carriers for the benefit of our businesses, visitors and residents. We provide a variety of free training courses for our members and advice, guidance and support to them whenever required.

In short we provide services and support that our independent businesses could never fund for themselves and the majority of them pay less than £1 a day for this service (under £365 per year).

Additionally, on behalf of our members we lobby and negotiate with our MP, the three tiers of Councils, the Police and other organisations and companies to provide a better trading environment for our members.

I oversee a small team with four colleagues and I work to a Board of Directors, all volunteers, with David Marjoram, owner of the Gusto Pronto Group (The One Bull, Damson & Wilde, Vino Gusto etc.) being our current Chairman.

In regards of the current health of our town centre, it continues to be very positive with our retail unit vacancy rate being around half of the UK figure.

New businesses continue to be a good mix of nationals and independents and recent openings include Primark, Everyman Cinema, Mowgli and Blue Fig.

So, this, is a very brief summary, of what the Our Bury St Edmunds does for its businesses and the benefits are able to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike!

*Mark Cordell*

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## **Licensing Update**

In 2009, because of the number of alcohol-related crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour incidents in the Grid, the local council adopted a Cumulative Impact Policy (initially called the Special Area Policy). The CAA had campaigned

for this on behalf of local residents. Following an online consultation last summer West Suffolk Council decided it could not renew the policy because of a change in the law, which means that the policy can only be renewed if there is evidence that it is still required.

Councillors concluded that, whereas there were “some problems of noise, disturbance and criminal damage connected with a small number of specific premises in Bury St Edmunds, this is not sufficient evidence to justify retaining a CIA policy because it is not directly connected to the volume of licensed premises and instead relates to the management of individual premises.” This of course does not take into account alcohol related crime and antisocial behaviour by people passing through the Grid.

Hopefully revoking the policy will not result in an increase in crime and antisocial behaviour but, if it does, we will need to provide evidence to West Suffolk Council for it to be reinstated. If you are affected, please keep your own records e.g. photos, date and time, and depending on the circumstances, report the incident to West Suffolk Council licensing department or the police.

The best way to report issues relating to specific licensed premises is to email [licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@westsuffolk.gov.uk) or report online:

[https://westsuffolk-self.achieveservice.com/service/West Suffolk Council enquiry form](https://westsuffolk-self.achieveservice.com/service/West_Suffolk_Council_enquiry_form) or phone the customer services team on 01284 763233.

Crime, disorder, public nuisance and antisocial behaviour should be reported to the police. If incidents aren't reported they will not be recorded.

If someone is in immediate danger or there is a threat to public safety call 999. To report antisocial behaviour or damage to property call 101 or report online at [suffolk.police.uk](http://suffolk.police.uk)

**If you need any further information please contact me,**

**Cathy Friel – 01284 755549**

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## The Bury Society Blue Plaques

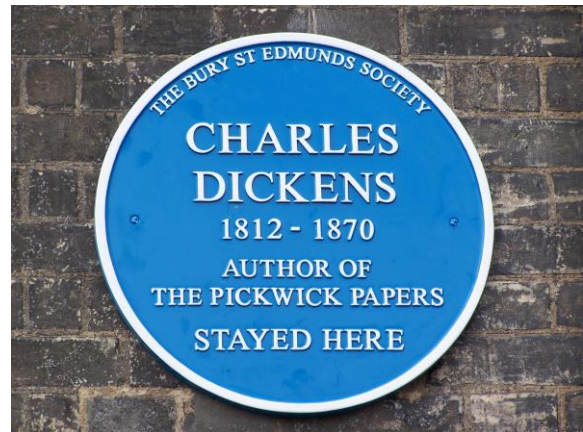
In Bury St Edmunds in 1907 eleven stone oval plaques and one rectangular one were put onto buildings by the corporation to commemorate various people who had connections with the town's heritage and history. This was to coincide with the wonderful pageant of that year, and those plaques, admittedly somewhat weather-worn, are still with us today. Over a hundred years later in 2010 the Bury Society decided to implement a nationally accepted approach for recognition namely a Blue Plaque Scheme. This would acknowledge and celebrate the lives of individuals who have further contributed to the life, culture and events of our town. Following the recommended criteria as laid out by English Heritage that a person must be dead for over 20 years or born 100 years ago the Bury Society drew up a short list of those who could be recorded for posterity with a Blue Plaque. Their association with our historic

town is very important and consequently needed to be recorded to enable residents and visitors alike to appreciate them.

On the auspicious day of February 7th 2012, 2 years almost to the day after it was started, the Bury Society was able to inaugurate a trail to seven worthy recipients of a Blue Plaque. Following a great deal of research, discussions and agreements concerning all of the plaques, the first plaque made of cast aluminium was put on the Angel Hotel to eminent Victorian author, Charles Dickens, February 7th being his date of birth 200 years ago. Dickens' book *The Pickwick Papers*, written in instalments, and its connection the Angel Hotel is well documented. The Blue Plaque scheme, an eclectic mix of four men and three women, surprised English Heritage because it included three women. The other recipients who have contributed to and enriched the history of the town are: artists Sybil Andrews and

Rose Mead, James Oakes banker and diarist, Lewis Nockalls Cottingham architect, Frederic Gershom Parkington Cellist & Clock collector and finally Norah Lofts, author. The plaque to her in Northgate Street was the last one of the seven put up in this year. However one more was to follow, because the society was asked in 2015 to put up a Blue Plaque to commemorate a Zeppelin raid on Bury St Edmunds a hundred years earlier. Then seven people were killed. As there was no memorial to this tragic event, the owners of Denny's shop at the corner of St Andrews St South and Kings Road were approached as their building was also a victim of Zeppelin bombs and they kindly agreed. The scheme could not have happened without the co-operation of the owners of the properties to which the plaques are affixed and help from many other agencies such as the Borough

Council, English Heritage and the Sybil Andrews Heritage Trust. A big thank you to all those concerned.



To all those who wish to follow the plaques' whereabouts there is a FOC trail leaflet available from the Tourist Information Office at the Cathedral Shop. This pamphlet has a map and details of the first seven recipients.

*Martyn Taylor*

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## Thank you for the opportunity to introduce Bury Drop in Centre

Bury Drop In serves people who are homeless and vulnerably housed. Our guests include street homeless, rough sleepers, and sofa-surfers. We also care for those in temporary accommodation (e.g., hotels and hostels), and people who are housed but need some support to avoid falling back into homelessness. Our vision is: To care for and inspire homeless people as we work to ensure everyone has a place to call home.

Homelessness doesn't exist, but people without a home do; and we know that no-one chooses to sleep rough. There are numerous causes and individual circumstances for this: unemployment, illness, accidents, addictions, trauma, strokes of fate – and then comes the spiral of poverty. Unemployment, for example, is very much associated with financial losses.

Homelessness is the result of a crisis process and not the beginning of a crisis process. If these reasons are not considered, then the probability that people will not really be able

to cope with the new accommodation, for example, is relatively high. In other words, what we need is a very individual view of the fate of these people.

We have over 130 registered guests enjoying our home-cooked nutritious meals in a safe environment. Our volunteers share the meal, chatting and listening to almost 50 guests at every session. We help our guests to progress with support from local agencies such as the West Suffolk Council Rough Sleeper Service, NHS Health Outreach, art projects, Terrence Higgins Trust, Samaritans, Jobcentre, and Citizens Advice.

Street homeless guests receive essential items such as a tent and sleeping bag until their housing situation is established. This includes prison leavers and people discharged from hospital, with all systems stretched to the limit. We provide shower vouchers for the local leisure centre, a takeaway sandwich bag, food vouchers for local businesses, a laundry voucher and clothing support from

our emergency stock and the Salvation Army.

Guests in emergency accommodation are supported with their individual needs, this can be clothes for an interview or a donated



bike to improve health and mental wellbeing. When guests are moving into more permanent accommodation, we support with essential items such as a bed or a fridge and moving costs.

A vital item is a mobile phone, a lifeline to receive benefits, keep GP appointments, contact probation and housing agencies.

To increase support, we launched and co-funded emergency dental care treatment for thirty-two of our guests. <https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/bury-st-edmunds/news/mobile-dental-service-visits-town-to-help-homeless-community-9294964/> and relaunched a second treatment block of three in winter 2023 <https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/bury-st-edmunds/news/some-people-it-s-life-changing-dental-visits-home-9334412/>.

As a charity, we are volunteer-led with over 50 volunteers. Our volunteers come from a

wide age range from West Suffolk College placement students to retirees. Our volunteers include writers, nurses, therapists, teachers, shop assistants, and home makers. We are very flexible and welcome everyone over 18. You do not need any experience of volunteering, all we ask of you is that you are compassionate, identify with our values, are friendly and reliable.

We rely heavily on funding and donations. Annual visits from the High Sheriff [High Sheriff of Suffolk praises work Bury St Edmunds homeless charity Bury Drop In during visit \(suffolknews.co.uk\)](https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/bury-st-edmunds/news/high-sheriff-praises-work-bury-st-edmunds-homeless-charity-bury-drop-in-during-visit-9334412/), the Suffolk Community Foundation, and support from local businesses enables us to achieve our goals to serve the community.

Many guests have moved on since Bury Drop In opened its doors; one guest stated recently: "I haven't had a secure and safe home of my own for 10 years. It's the best thing ever – I cried when I was told I had been offered my own place, I didn't believe it until I had the keys in my hand and even then I kept checking with my support worker."

Every prayer, fundraiser, donation, and volunteer hour makes a difference. Bury Drop In sessions run every Tuesday and Friday 11am-1.30pm at Trinity Church, Brentgovel Street, BSE IP33 1EB.

Please visit [www.burydropin.org](http://www.burydropin.org) for further information or contact me directly [sabine.dornusch@burydropin.org](mailto:sabine.dornusch@burydropin.org) or 07483 314 445.

*Sabine Dornbusch*

# THE CHEESE HOLE CO

**LOCATION: HATTER STREET, BURY ST EDMUNDS**

**OWNERS: FRANCISCO & SABINA PERELLO**

**BRIEF INTRODUCTION:** We are a husband and wife team, Francisco and Sabina, and our concern is a new retail business in the style of a classic traditional cheesemonger's shop.

Having taken on a new lease in August 2020 (during the pandemic) we finally launched in November, 2022.

Our offering is a large cheese counter with a varied selection of approximately 75+ cheeses including continental and locally produced specialities alongside a wide range of cheese-centric accompaniments, many of which are also gluten free.

We initially sought to purchase an existing business but before long, we realised that we wanted to offer something completely different than what we were seeing since we were heavily influenced in our travels by many cheesemongers who inspired us. We took 5 years, while doing other jobs, to complete our wide range of research and development which involved, amongst other things, 35,000 miles of travel, sitting in classrooms, visiting many dairies and shops, working alongside cheesemongers and mentors, visiting trade shows, and even standing in fields with producers and their livestock, nose to nose!

**DO YOU GO ABOVE & BEYOND WHEN IT COMES TO SERVING YOUR CUSTOMERS?**

We like to consider our offering as 'analogue' and we strive to offer as personal a service as possible. That means taking extra time with each customer to find out what 'floats their boat', and using dedicated tasting boards, we offer cheese samples so that our customers can 'experience' cheese 'up close and personal'. By engaging with customers in this way, we help them to build up not only a better knowledge of the cheeses they enjoy but we assist them in expanding their experience of the amazing products we

have access to. Some customers can feel overwhelmed by walking into a cheese shop with so much to consider – we are mindful of this and we want our customers to feel at ease, relaxed and to have some fun.

We take time to study the cheeses we offer so that we can confidently share the story of the cheeses and their producers. We are always reading and attending training opportunities wherever possible.

Customers want to be informed about what they are eating these days and we very much enjoy helping them to feel connected to the cheese and its origins.

**WHAT HAVE YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGES BEEN IN RECENT TIMES AND HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THEM?**

Of course the Pandemic! Having taken on a shop lease in mid lockdown, with flowing plans for a full new re-fit, we hit a major bump in the road. There was a great shortage of tradesmen as our plumber's wife got Covid, so did his son and then so did he. This applied to shop-fitters, electricians, carpenters and others.

Then that other word Brexit! There were issues with waiting for parts to be ordered from Europe and companies were closed due to the pandemic too.

Somehow, we managed to get over the line and opened just 4 weeks before Christmas 2022. Swollen hands and ankles accompanied by a huge sense of joy, followed. We could not have done it without the grace and patience of all our customers during that period and the astonishing efforts of our suppliers, tradesmen and mentors (you all know who you are).

## **HOW ABOUT SUCCESSES – WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF AND HOW DID THEY COME ABOUT?**

One year on, we now have many regulars who will ask for cheeses which may have been obscure before we opened. Now we even have the pleasure of being told by customer to “add anything else you know I will like” to their hauls.

More than one customer has handed over a piece of cheese they like which we did not stock, and we have gone on to stock it as a regular featured item.

## **HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CUSTOMER BASE?**

Our customers are looking for a quality product that has a clear provenance and is distinct from the mass-produced vacuum packed fayre that is so dominant in the wider marketplace. They care about where the cheese comes from, if it's local (or not), and that the animals who produce the milk are cared for and roam freely. Many have gluten, lactose or cow milk intolerances, and we are proud to be able to provide them with a broad choice of products in these areas. Many customers who have expressed a preference for non-goat cheese for instance, are now firm lovers of Carba al Vino, Killeen and Harbourne Blue, to name a few.

## **WHAT DO YOU FEEL SETS YOU APART FROM OTHERS?**

We are very much about the cheese. We are not looking to be a convenience store. It's all about seeing, smelling and tasting the cheese. We do not offer an internet ordering service since we believe that the environmental impact is too great while re-shipping and the quality will invariably suffer in transit. We also passionately believe that customers are rightly more demanding and discerning about what they put inside their bodies these days: let's face, you wouldn't buy a pair of

shoes without trying them on, would you?. Well, cheese goes into your body, so we want everyone to go home knowing that the cheese they purchased IS just what they were after and knowing that they will delight in it.

## **PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR?**

We do plan to continue to expand our offering as the year progresses. This will not just be new cheese but other complementing products which either go with cheese or sit happily adjacent to cheese.

We may also look at hosting tasting events of some nature, but that is still very much in the planning.

## **BEST SELLING CHEESES:**

**ISLE OF MULL** (A hard Scottish cow's milk cheese, savoury & boozy).

**BARON BIGOD** (A flagship Suffolk bloomy rind cheese, oozy & mushroomy).

**ALP BLOSSOM** (A sweet semi-hard cow's cheese with a rind of meadow blossoms and herbs from Bavaria).

**CABRA AL VINO** (Red wine soaked, creamy goat cheese from Murcia, Spain).

**SUFFOLK BLUE** (A soft blue cheese with a seasonal light blue vein) - lately actually tasting like a bright lemon curd (we are in love with it).



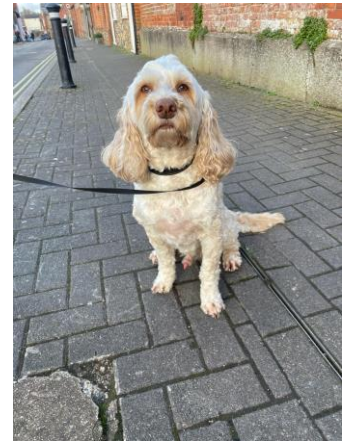
## MORE GRID DOGS.....



*Tilly from Crown Street*



*Brodie from Crown Street*



*Sisco from College Street*



*Mungo from College Street*



*Doris and Mabel from  
Churchgate Street*



*Bambi and Bussy from  
Churchgate Street*

## **YOUR COMMITTEE 2023-24**

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**Brian Jones, Planning, 8 Hatter Street**

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[caainfo@btinternet.com](mailto:caainfo@btinternet.com)**

**Cathy Friel, Licensing, Minute Secretary, 42 Crown Street**

**Geoffrey House, Air Quality, 8 William Barnaby Yard**

**Paget Fulcher, Traffic and Parking, 7a Bridewell Lane, [pagetf@gmail.com](mailto:pagetf@gmail.com)**



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