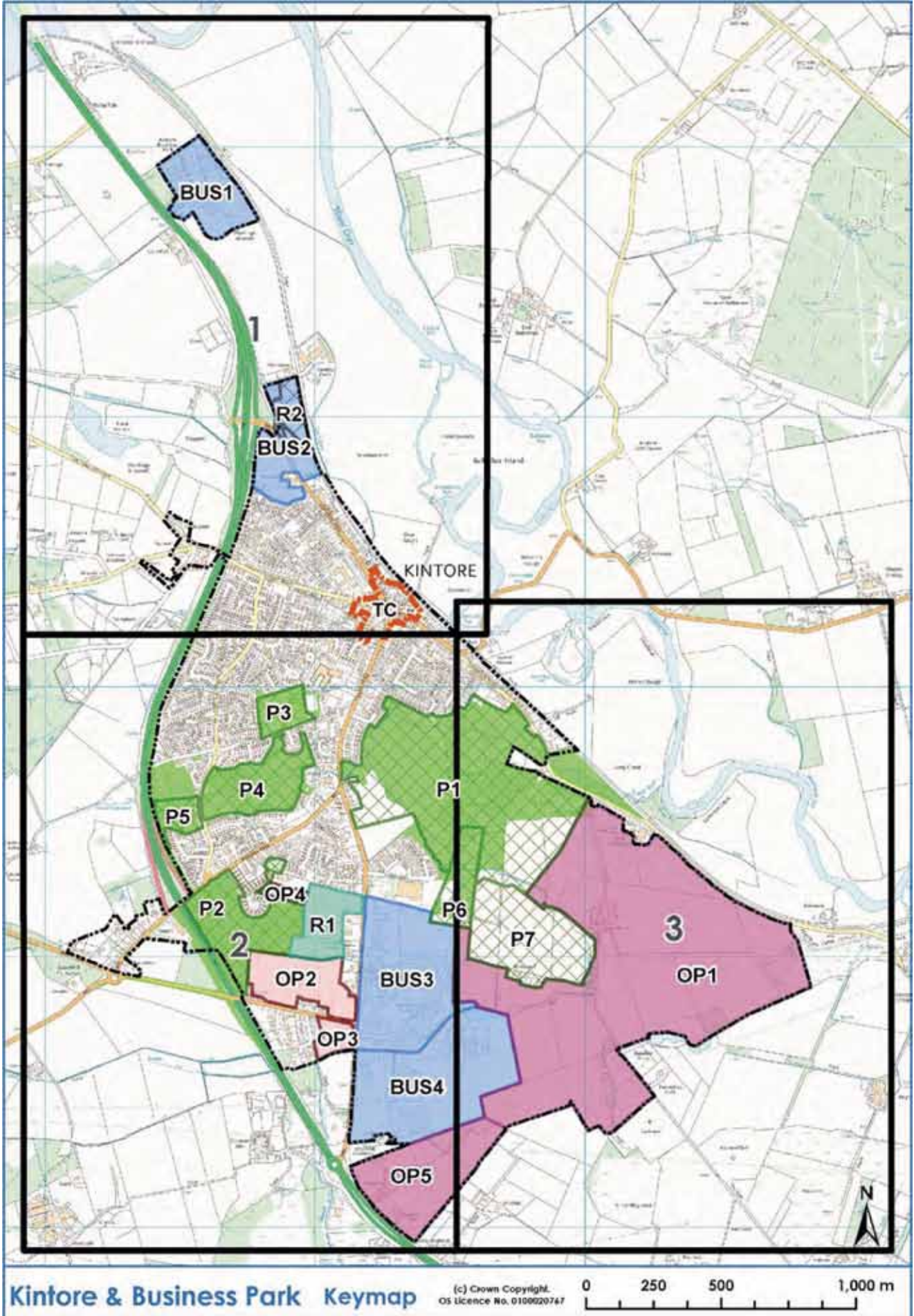


Kintore Community Action Plan

October 2015



Origins and Development *(with thanks to local long-time resident Sheila Gray)*

Kintore is an ancient Royal Burgh, which lies in the valley of the river Don, 12 miles from Aberdeen. It has been a Royal Burgh since 1190. It was granted the Royal Coat of Arms in April 1959 by Lord Lyon King of Arms.

Kintore has many Royal connections such as King Kenneth and King James IV. Also Robert the Bruce was said to have stayed at Kintore Castle at Hall Forest and in the woods at Thainstone. Kintore Castle is now a ruin.

Kintore was once a large wooded area hence the names Tom Forest, Ann's Forest, John's Forest and Hall Forest. There was a lot of wild game in the forest that was hunted for food and pleasure.

The Town House in the square of Kintore is a magnificent building. It was built on the old market green and was completed in 1736 at a cost of £850.

The battles of the Braes of Tuach hill resulted in the Oak Leaf becoming the crest for Kintore.

Long before there was a bridge over the river Don on the road to Balbithan and Fintray there was a ferry crossing which took people and cattle across. The boatman's name was George Marnoch also known as Boatie Marnoch. The iron bridge was built in 1882.

A canal ran through Kintore from Aberdeen to Port Elphinstone. The travellers could stop off at the Bridge Ale House which lies at the north end of the village for refreshments. It was a farm house for many years but is now derelict.

There were two churches in the village, The Free Church which was on Northern Road was burned down and is now a store and also the Parish Church which stands in the square and is very much used today.

The Parish Church was built in 1819 on the site of an earlier church. It is aligned east west and located in the heart of Kintore, at the junction of a number of roads. A fairly large graveyard extends to the south and east and has a number of old gravestones and an early double-sided Pictish stone. The architect was the well-known Archibald Simpson, who designed many buildings in Aberdeen and the North East. His uncle Rev. John Shand was the minister at that time.

Kintore had a population of around 2000 in the 1940's but has grown a lot over recent years with a lot more houses being built in the area. The population today is approximately 4500.

The old school, which had been a secondary as well as a primary school, was knocked down just short of its 100th birthday to build a new primary school in the playing field at the back in 2006.

Kintore was a busy village which catered for everyone's needs. It had three grocer's shops, three small sweet shops, a working bakery, an egg grading station, four petrol stations, three garages, a shoe maker and shop, joiner and undertaker, butcher, chemist, and post office. "Dibs" was a shop that did leather repairs, watch repairs, gent's hairdresser, bookies, it didn't matter what you asked for they could help you out.



The Town House.



Kintore Parish Church and War Memorial.



Kintore School.



The Post Office and Community Hub.

The Post Office used to be behind the Town House before it moved across the road onto the main street. The old shop behind the Town House was then a small grocer's. The Church Manse was at Goosecroft House on Forest Road until the house across the road was bequeathed to the church. It was used as the manse for many years until recently when the minister moved to the East Park estate at the south end of the village.

The doctor's surgery was on School Road for many years with one doctor to serve the whole community. Then a new surgery was built at Inverurie and the doctors now work from there.

Kintore railway station was closed in the 1950's but is scheduled to reopen in the next few years.

There is still an active Fire Station run by part time firemen.

The Kintore Pipe Band has run for many years and is still going strong today, and plays annually at the Summer Festival.

The Bowling Club was started in 1932 and has a healthy membership today. The Golf Club which lies over the Don Bridge near Balbithan has been there for quite a number of years and is well attended.



Kintore Pipe Band at the Summer Festival



Bowling Green.

The Smiddy on Castlehill has been a busy place for a long time where horses were shod but now it is mainly wrought iron work.

The chemist and newsagent used to be in one shop at 1 Northern Road where the Tandoori is now. The chemist moved along the street but the newsagent stayed. It was a busy shop, the hub of the village.

Tom's Forest Quarry has been a very busy place for many years employing many skilled and hard working men and is still in operation today. There has been a quarry there since 1830. The Knackery at the Cottown was where cattle were taken when they died and the carcasses were made into bone meal, blood manure, soap and lipstick.

The Masonic Hall on Northern Road is still being used.

Kintore had three busy working hotels but sadly there is only one left which is meantime being altered.

The Kintore Police station was the hub of activity manned by the local Bobby. It is a lovely building that is now a family home. The police now work from the Inverurie Police Station.

Kintore is a very prosperous village but sadly lacks many of the facilities we had in years gone by.

Developing the Kintore Community Action Plan

In May 2014, after discussions with Kintore & District Community Council about the possibility of a community action plan for Kintore, the Garioch Local Community Planning Group via The Garioch Partnership, CVSA (now Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action) and local Community Learning & Development staff took part in the Kintore Summer Festival to ascertain the views of the community on living and working in the town. This gave a snapshot of the community's views on what they liked about Kintore and what could be better. Some of the most commonly held views are listed below.

Things we like about Kintore

- I like coming to Kintore as it still has a community feel
- Lovely community spirit
- What we love is that everyone is friendly, people speak to you
- Christmas decorations
- I love the community spirit and am impressed by the management of the school (but so huge now so hurry up with number two)
- Plenty tea rooms
- Good walks
- A good church
- Lovely community
- Love the playpark
- Buses and good facilities (eg. Co-op)
- Been here 44 years and love it
- Good for dog walking
- Kintore is a great community and has lovely open spaces
- Love outdoor space, especially Tuach Hill
- Community focused area
- Good size
- People are willing to talk to you
- The amount of children and how friendly everyone is
- Love the social spaces
- Friendly family atmosphere

- School
- Has potential to be a really good town. Facilities must match new developments and not have to be added on as an afterthought like the Bothie
- It's fun

What could be better?

- Please do not knock down the Torryburn Hotel to build flats (*unfortunately now burned down June 2105*)
- Enough houses, we need a hotel/ somewhere local to eat
- Leisure centre
- Sort out any complications with the sale of old Kintore Hall
- More of this kind of event (*the Summer Festival*)
- Scale down the railways station idea to a "pod" stop, and make it happen sooner
- We'd like a swimming pool
- There could be more shops
- Would love to have a family friendly restaurant and get the railway station open.
- Gateway Kintore would be great to have
- Please could we have an evening restaurant (family friendly one)
- Responsible dog walkers (no poo)
- Bus service not on school road anymore.
- Train station needed
- 2nd school NOW!
- More shops - why not offer rates free for first year to encourage this?
- Council listening to local views, especially regarding housing and facilities
- Lack of facilities i.e. supermarket,



Summer festival volunteers.



Summer Festival.



The Bothie.



Event flyer.



Community Consultation.



Community Consultation.

This initial community engagement exercise was followed up over the summer by an electronic “Survey Monkey” questionnaire sent out using the Kintore Mums Facebook group and the Kintore.org website plus local contacts. A hard copy version was also circulated to members of some community groups where digital participation might have proved difficult. There were 68 respondents to the electronic survey and 18 to the printed version, a total of 88, which represents only 2% of the total population. However the analysed results gave a very similar picture to the views expressed at the May event, and our view is that they could be accepted as useful evidence of local opinion. The top three points that people liked about Kintore were:

1. The community spirit
2. Its location, in particular the commuting distance from Aberdeen
3. It's a friendly and safe place

The main points where people felt improvements could be made were:

1. More local facilities, in particular shops/supermarket/petrol station/pub/hotel/restaurant
2. Transport links - roads/rail/bus services
3. Schools, leisure and community facilities
4. Walks and paths

In spring 2015 two more structured engagement sessions were organised under the heading Action Kintore with the support of Kintore & District Community Council.

The first of these took the form of a drop-in where residents were invited to place themed cards on a map of the

village, a modification of the Planning for Real® approach, in order to identify areas of interest to them that would improve the quality of life in Kintore. Some 48 people attended, which was a disappointing turnout for the size of the community, given that the flyer had been delivered to every door by volunteers. Of these 50% were over 60, 25% were between 40-60, 6% were between 18-40 and 19% were under 18. The gender split was 50/50. There was strong consistency between the points raised at this event and those highlighted in the survey and at the previous year's Summer Festival.

The second event was two weeks later. This time 30 residents were joined by a number of community planning partners to look at the issues that had been raised previously, to prioritise these and develop actions from them to feature in the action plan.

It was clear from the three phases of community consultation that there were four main areas of concern, namely the need for

- more local facilities, in particular shops/supermarket/petrol station/pub/hotel/restaurant
- better transport links - roads/rail/bus services
- supplementary capacity in schools, leisure and community facilities
- additional walks and paths and other environmental improvements

These main issues and the other outcomes of the consultation have been used to create this Action Plan to help the community to focus and develop their future goals and to inform the Garioch Local Community Plan.

The Garioch Community Plan 2013 - 2016

The Garioch Local Community Plan brings together the key actions and projects of a number of public agencies. It also includes actions based on consultation with the local communities and local community groups. The plan can be accessed on the following link:

www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/images/media/document_library/minutes/local_groups/garioch/garioch%20community%20plan%20%202013-16%20final.pdf

The plan is a live document that is updated every six weeks to allow new actions to be added and completed ones to be removed. The main priority outcomes are around the themes of

social inclusion, welfare reform, strong, resilient, safe communities, and early intervention. Currently there is one specific action for Kintore, action 3.3 which is:

To work with the community of Kintore to identify the needs and aspirations of the community through a community-wide engagement

Many of the other actions in this plan are high level and Garioch-wide, and are intended to improve the quality of life and have an impact across the whole area. It is pleasing to see that the actions in the Kintore Community Action Plan are entirely complementary to those in the local community plan.



Summer display outside the Town House.



Outside the Town House.



The Fountain.



Kintore School.



All weather pitch.



Kintore Village Hall.

Kintore Community Action Plan

Many issues were raised through consultation process, and these, as well as the four main areas of concern already mentioned are described in more detail below under a series of headings. The Community Council and community planning partners are very aware that some of these issues will be easier to take forward than others. The Community Council is already exploring a renewable energy scheme as a way of funding some of these projects but this might be difficult due to recent tariff changes proposed by the government.

Community Facilities:

The growth in population in Kintore has not been matched with an adequate increase in community facilities. A community hub built in the flats on Northern Road was only open for a short while, and the space is now leased by a local voluntary organisation. The iconic Town House is rented out in the meantime by the Council for business use, although a working group has been set up to look at its long term future. The community is fortunate to have The Bothie, as a resource for its young people and other community groups, but more is needed as the teenage population grows. The community space built into the primary school has had to be used for additional classroom space. It is widely anticipated this will be returned to community use in due course. A second primary school is planned but it has been delayed due to difficulties in acquiring land. Although it will provide additional sports and leisure facilities, a dedicated community-run centre and sports hub akin to the AXIS centre in Newmachar or MACBI at Mintlaw is seen as an ideal solution for Kintore. This building would meet the needs

expressed for local evening classes, a multi-gym, more sporting and active life-style opportunities, homework and other after-school clubs and so on, publicly accessible disabled toilets, as well as becoming a focal point for the community. A skate-boarding park is also seen as a valuable addition to Kintore and this project is being taken forward by the Scouts.

Transport

The re-opening of the railway station in Kintore is eagerly awaited as an alternative commuter route to Aberdeen and elsewhere. Residents would like to see improvements to the evening bus service and there are some concerns about bus routes and bus stops, which have been raised with the Garioch Area Bus Forum.

Environment

Kintore is situated in beautiful countryside in the heart of the Garioch. Many residents are keen to maintain and preserve the environment and to enhance it by improving paths, creating a local nature reserve and cleaning up litter, in particular dog mess and establishing a community garden and community composting scheme. Mention was made of the Gauchhill Woods and the fields alongside Tom's Forest Road which are wildlife rich, as well as Hall Forest and Rollo Mire, an area of wet woodland swamp to the west of the village. It is felt that a new group along the lines of Greener Kemnay would be useful in taking forward these actions.

Health and Wellbeing

Access to GP and other health services was seen as problematic by some participants, and there is a desire to maintain a GP surgery in Kintore. The availability of care, including respite care, for a growing elderly population was flagged up, as was the need for good liaison between carers, patients and professionals. There were several requests for the blood donor service to hold sessions in Kintore.

Community Safety

As might be expected in an area of Scotland with a very low rate of crime the main message here was how safe people felt in their community. The main action therefore for this plan is to keep the community feeling safe. There were some concerns expressed about road safety and the need for more pedestrian crossings when the new school and more housing developments were built.

Housing

Much of the new development in Kintore has been of large, “executive” family homes, creating a feel of uniformity rather than a mixed community. While current planning policy ensures that there is a percentage of affordable housing in each development, it would be good to see a mixture of appropriate, affordable housing to buy or rent that meets the needs of all members of the community, from the youngest to the oldest. It would also be good if the community’s voice was heard more by developers and planners.

Local Services

Perhaps the most commonly voiced comment during the consultation was the lack of places to socialise and shop in Kintore. At the time of the consultation the last remaining pub in the village had closed, although now at the time of writing, there is hope that it will reopen. There are several “takeaways” and a daytime coffee shop, but nowhere to enjoy a meal with family and friends. The nearest large supermarket is in Inverurie, with a couple of local smaller stores, and one in the offing. Certainly there are less shops than many years ago, reflecting society’s changing shopping habits and our reliance on the motor car.

Broadband

Despite the fibre broadband upgraded in 2014, speeds and connectivity remain an issue for many community members, with widespread dissatisfaction with the service.

Communication

Kintore benefits from a community newsletter Kintore Konnect, produced and circulated widely by the Parish Church; it has several active Facebook groups, most notable Kintore Mums, and an active website, Kintore.org run by a community volunteer. However it became clear during the consultation that despite these communication tools many community members were unaware of existing community activity.

A summarised Action Plan for each of these headings follows:



The pub and the Square.



The heart of Kintore.



Looking out from the Church.

Action	How will this be taken forward?			By When?
	Independent Community Group/Private Initiative	Partnership	Outside Agencies	
To provide a new purpose built community and sports centre/community hub		KDCC, Aberdeenshire Council, Garioch Local Community Planning Group, the Kintore Community	Sports Scotland Lottery Other funders Developers	2020
To ensure a sustainable future for the Town House	Aberdeenshire Council, KDCC			ongoing
To provide a new skatepark	Kintore Scouts	KDCC, the Kintore Community		2018
To improve school and community facilities			Aberdeenshire Council ECS	2016/17
To develop the Bothie	Action Kintore			ongoing
To reopen the railway station		NESTRANS Aberdeenshire Council	Transport Scotland	2019
To improve bus services and routes		Kintore Community Council, Garioch Area Bus Forum, Aberdeenshire Council		ongoing
To develop a network of paths	“Greener Kintore” - a new group	KDCC, Aberdeenshire Council, the wider community	Paths For All NHS Grampian SUSTRANS	review 2016
To create a nature reserve	“Greener Kintore” - a new group	as above		2018
To establish a community garden/composting scheme/allotments	“Greener Kintore” - a new group	as above		2018
To reduce litter/dog mess		K&DCC, Aberdeenshire Council Dog Warden, Schools		ongoing
To provide better access to GP and other health services		KDCC, Garioch H&SC Locality Group, AVA	NHS Grampian	ongoing

Action	How will this be taken forward?			By When?
	Independent Community Group/Private Initiative	Partnership	Outside Agencies	
To investigate the possibility of a blood donor session in Kintore		KDCC	NHS Grampian	2016
To maintain "I feel safe here"		KDCC, Police Scotland, Garioch & North Marr Community Safety Group		ongoing
To provide appropriate, affordable housing		KDCC	Aberdeenshire Council Planning, Housing Associations, developers	ongoing
To have a local family friendly pub, hotel, or restaurant and more shops	Private business	AC Economic Development		review 2017
To improve broadband speed and connectivity	BT Scotland		Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Government	2016
To improve communication	KDCC			ongoing

This booklet is one of a series produced by the Local Rural Partnerships for a number of communities in Aberdeenshire.

This initiative is sponsored by Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership and run by Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships. The aim is to provide community action plans in an

attractive, easy to read, professionally printed format.

This information can now guide the community and Community Planning Partners in drawing up detailed action plans to implement the top priorities as well as addressing the other issues which have been identified. For each priority or issue this will involve agreeing who should be involved, what resources will be needed and target dates for completion. It is hoped that this process will be driven by representatives of the community with support - moral, technical and financial - from the relevant Partners.

It is important that this booklet is seen by all concerned as an account of the community's views at the time of the latest consultation, and that it will have to be regularly updated. As some projects are completed, other issues will arise and take their place in future versions of the community plan.

It is recommended that this plan has a maximum life of five years

Kintore & District Community Council would like to thank

- **the community of Kintore for its participation in this project**
- **the three Ward 12 Councillors for their encouragement**
- **Action Kintore for the use of its brand name**
- **The Garioch Partnership, Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action and CLD staff for their direction and encouragement**

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