

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16



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## Introduction

The choices that we all make about food have far reaching consequences on health, well being, the environment and the prosperity of the town.

The Middlesbrough Food Partnership has reviewed Middlesbrough's approach to sustainable food. Working with a range of partners, the group has identified a number of actions that residents, community groups, organisations and businesses can take for a more sustainable and secure food future for Middlesbrough.

This has resulted in this Food Action Plan that addresses shared priorities to promote Middlesbrough as a place where more people have the opportunity to eat healthy and sustainable food that is easier to buy and offers value for money.

Within this Food Action Plan there is a new Food Charter and People's Food Pledge. These will help guide households and organisations on how everyone can make a positive contribution to sustainable food and in many cases save money in the current economic climate. Please consider what you can do to help.

We hope this Food Action Plan will inspire you to support the initiatives set out under each of the six themes. Together, we can all bring about the lifestyle changes that are needed to make Middlesbrough more sustainable with healthy and affordable food available for everyone in the town.

This Food Action Plan would not have been possible without the valuable contributions made by the organisations that have supported the Middlesbrough Food Partnership. Thank you for your interest and support.



Cllr Julia Rostron



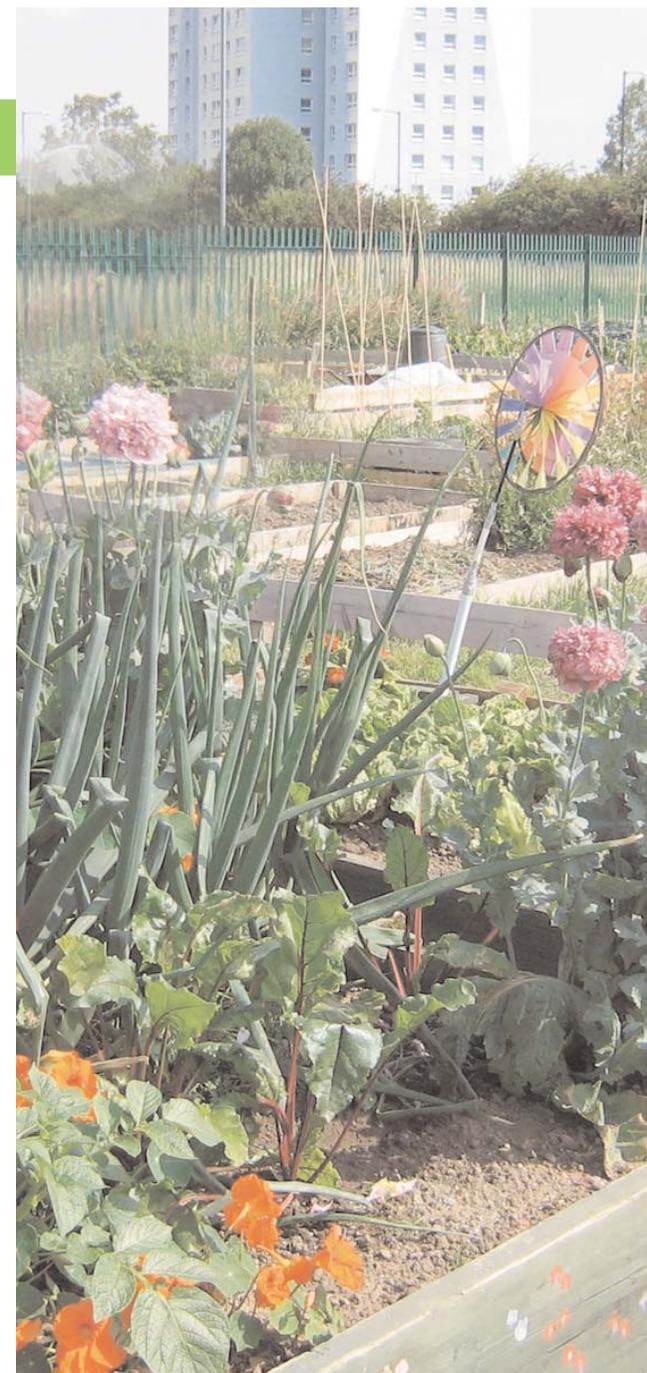
Cllr Mick Thompson

**Cllr Julia Rostron,**

Chair of Middlesbrough Environment City

**Cllr Mick Thompson,**

Middlesbrough Council, Executive Member for Communities and Public Health



# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

## Background and Context

In 2010/11, Middlesbrough Environment City coordinated the development and launch of a town wide Food Sustainability Action Plan. The Action Plan was influenced by Middlesbrough's innovative Healthy Town Programme, the One Planet Living framework and public health priorities.

Since then, Middlesbrough has been designated as the UK's first One Planet Living Region with a work programme to help local people live healthier and more sustainable lives in a way that often saves money. One of the ten One Planet Living principles involves a commitment to 'Local And Sustainable Food'. The evidence shows that food production and consumption accounts for 25% of Middlesbrough's ecological footprint; the amount of land and resources required by Middlesbrough residents to maintain their lifestyle. Middlesbrough's footprint is typical of the UK's ecological footprint which is equivalent to requiring nearly three Planet Earths to be sustainable. The interventions and ambitions in this Action Plan address this concern.

The Food Action Plan has been developed by the Middlesbrough Food Partnership through six themes which are: Health and Nutrition; Local and Sustainable Food; Reducing Food Waste; Fairness in the Food Chain / Tackling Food Poverty; Education and Skills; and a Strong Local Food Economy and Catering.

During the development of this document, the Middlesbrough Food Partnership has been mindful of the need to tackle food poverty in the town with the aim of prioritising interventions to ensure that everyone has access to healthy, nutritious and

affordable food. This will remain a significant challenge for the foreseeable future and will remain a top priority for the Middlesbrough Food Partnership.

A broader challenge at the national and global level is sustainable food and food security. Global food production and food supplies impact on, and are influenced by, many factors including climate change, global economic changes, population growth, food shortfalls, ethical production methods, fossil fuel uncertainties and energy costs. The relationship is complex. The danger is that over the next decade, food prices will rise above inflation meaning that the risk of food poverty in Middlesbrough will increase unless the town makes plans for what is predicted. This Food Action Plan considers the broader interventions that are required to address food security.

Since 2011, a UK Sustainable Food Cities Network has been established. The Network is developing and sharing best practice with local communities so there will be opportunities for Middlesbrough to contribute to this process.

A new development is the production of a Middlesbrough Food Charter intended to bring community groups, businesses and policy makers together to set and develop local priorities around shared values. The Food Charter is supported by an accompanying People's Food Pledge to give the whole community the opportunity to make a positive contribution to making Middlesbrough a healthier and more sustainable town for everyone.



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**LEAD PARTNERS:** Judith Hedgley, Environmental Health Manager and Joanna Bielby, Health Improvement Specialist (Middlesbrough Council)

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<b>ONE:</b>  <b>HEALTH AND NUTRITION</b>	<b>Development of a strategic, partnership approach to food and nutrition.</b>	1.1 Establish a Strategic Group with key partners. Agree frequency of meetings, task and finish groups and integration into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.	October 2015
		1.2 Establish priorities to address food and nutrition issues. A Food and Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan to be produced to monitor progress.	December 2015
		1.3 Establish a framework for the development of Food and Nutrition Champions.	December 2015
	<b>Ensure local residents eat a nutritious, balanced diet. Improve access to affordable healthy food and help local residents make informed food choices.</b>	1.4 Develop and implement food and nutrition interventions focussing on specific sectors of the community. e.g. Hearty-BEATS, BME and hard to reach groups, young people and students.	April 2015 - ongoing
		1.5 Support and promote national interventions for improved nutrition e.g. Healthy Start Scheme, Change4Life, breast feeding initiatives.	April 2015 - ongoing
		1.6 Utilise existing groups within the community to promote and develop cooking skills e.g. Know Your Money, Foodbanks.	April 2015 - ongoing
	<b>Encourage local businesses to provide safe, healthy and sustainable food to promote the well-being of their customers.</b>	1.7 Deliver initiatives to improve nutrition in elderly settings with a published work programme.	April 2015 - ongoing
		1.8 Delivery of Food4Health business award to encourage local food business to improve the nutritional quality of their food.	April 2015 - ongoing
	<b>Maximise the opportunities for working with businesses and using regulatory controls to improve the availability of nutritious food.</b>	1.9 Deliver initiatives and a work programme with a focus on nutritional quality of food in Early Years settings.	April 2015 - ongoing
		1.10 Develop a framework for the delivery of food and nutrition initiatives around workplaces linking into "Extra Life."	September 2015

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**LEAD PARTNER: Catherine Howell and Joe Dunne (Middlesbrough Environment City)**

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<b>TWO:</b>  <b>LOCAL AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD</b>	<b>Support town-wide initiatives that bring residents, communities and businesses together and help them increase the availability and consumption of local and sustainable food.</b>	2.1 Create a comprehensive local and sustainable food database and dedicated website together with a strong brand identity and accompanying criteria for local food.	July 2015
		2.2 Liaise with organisers of Restaurant Week and other events to ensure local and sustainable food is prioritised and marketed effectively.	December 2015
		2.3 Organise public local sustainable food events and publish an annual programme of events.	April 2015 onwards
	<b>Support food production that protects the environment and reduces Middlesbrough's environmental footprint.</b>	2.4 Promote the use of Middlesbrough's Farmers' Markets as a resource for food shopping.	July 2015
		2.5 Work with Environmental Health to target new food businesses and encourage sourcing of local food, e.g. by production of a local and sustainable food guidance note.	July 2015
		2.6 Encourage the use of existing food co-ops and support the development of new ones, e.g. in workplaces.	December 2015
	<b>Maximise the use and availability of land for food growing and help residents to produce more healthy and affordable food.</b>	2.7 Develop new sites for community food growing in community settings, particularly in areas with high demand/low availability.	July 2015 onwards
		2.8 Identify vacant and underused allotment plots to increase occupancy rates. Promote innovative and sustainable uses by a variety of groups.	July 2015 onwards
		2.9 Develop and deliver a partnership programme of training in food growing and horticulture.	April 2015 onwards

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**LEAD PARTNER: Philip Shaw, Recycling Officer and Ken Sherwood, Waste Policy Manager (Middlesbrough Council)**

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<p><b>THREE:</b></p> <p><b>REDUCING FOOD WASTE</b></p>	<p><b>Help residents and businesses to minimise, recycle and compost food waste, either individually or collectively.</b></p>	<p>3.1 Promote and encourage home composting to residents across Middlesbrough to include selling compost bins and providing advice on how to use them effectively.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>3.2 Provide dedicated web pages for businesses containing advice on waste reduction to promote zero waste.</p>	<p>November 2015</p>
		<p>3.3 Reduce the amount of waste sent for final disposal by 3% in 2015/16.</p>	<p>Report outcome in April /May 2016</p>
	<p><b>Encourage residents to buy food with minimal packaging to work towards zero waste.</b></p>	<p>3.4 Embark on Waste Prevention education programmes. Publish an annual programme in April 2015.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>
		<p>3.5 Continue to work with national bodies (CIWM, NAWDO, WRAP) to reduce the amount of packaging used by producers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>3.6 Promote the recycling of plastic containers (milk bottle, food trays, fruit trays) in the Council Blue Bin recycling scheme. Aim to increase the proportion of plastics recycled by 2% in 2015/16.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

**LEAD PARTNERS:** Melanie Greenwood, Middlesbrough Environment City

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<b>FOUR:</b>  <b>FAIRNESS IN THE FOOD CHAIN AND TACKLING FOOD POVERTY</b>	<b>Promote Middlesbrough's Fairtrade programme to ensure producers in developing countries are treated fairly with fair pay and working conditions.</b>	4.1 Continue the Town's Fairtrade programme under the direction of the Fairtrade Group with an annual programme of events.	April 2015 onwards
		4.2 Retain the Fairtrade accreditation and support participating partners with advice and guidance.	November 2015
		4.3 As agreed in a Council resolution, Middlesbrough Council will continue with the commitment to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee in official meetings and Fairtrade refreshments in Council managed catering outlets and vending machines.	Continuous
	<b>Ensure that Middlesbrough's approach to sustainable food gives priority to tackling food poverty and access to affordable healthy food for all.</b>	4.4 Produce written town-wide guidance through partnership to help reduce food poverty so residents have better knowledge and better access to affordable food. e.g. shopping on a budget, buying reduced/sell by date items.	December 2015
		4.5 Continue to work with Middlesbrough Foodbank, and support other food distribution centres across Middlesbrough, to ensure as many people as possible in need can access essential food (4,300 clients in 2014).	Continuous
		4.6 Provide education for Foodbank clients in healthy eating and cooking skills to improve their wellbeing. e.g. recipe cards with food parcels, slow cooker and microwave cooking courses.	April 2015 onwards

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

**LEAD PARTNERS:** Nick Barnes, (Askham Bryan College), Melanie Greenwood (Middlesbrough Environment City), Garry Weeks (Teesside University)

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<b>FIVE:</b>  <b>EDUCATION AND SKILLS</b>	<b>Give everyone the opportunity to learn about animal welfare, farming, good food and how to grow and cook it.</b>	5.1 Through partnership, facilitate a programme of school visits from Key Stage 1 to 4, to inspire young people to learn about farming, animal welfare, local food and how to grow and look after it.	September 2015
		5.2 Provide short adult community learning courses on animal husbandry and growing good food at home or on the allotment.	September 2015
		5.3 Provide cooking skills training for residents to use healthy and affordable foods, where possible using locally grown food.	April 2015 onwards
	<b>Inspire and enable the local food culture so that more residents have access to training and healthy affordable food.</b>	5.4 Establish an 'Academy of Food' brand in Middlesbrough to help local people learn and share best sustainable food practices, e.g. food growing, food production, bee keeping, composting, keeping poultry, preserving food, food safety, healthy eating, cooking skills, running a business.	September 2015
		5.5 Promote the benefits of Middlesbrough's Farmers' Markets as a resource for healthy and sustainable food shopping. Encourage food suppliers to attend.	September 2015
		5.6 Offer short term loans of allotments and vegetable patches and glass houses/polytunnels to the local community.	September 2015
	<b>Provide a mechanism for residents and businesses to participate in the whole programme.</b>	5.7 Publish a 'People's Food Pledge' with information on how everyone can help.	September 2015
		5.8 Publish a 'Food Charter' with supporting information to encourage the involvement of businesses, public sector partners, schools, colleges and voluntary and community sector organisations.	September 2015

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

**LEAD PARTNER: Alister Wrigley (Commercial Catering Manager, Middlesbrough College) with support from Richie Andrew (Public Health, Middlesbrough Council)**

THEME	OBJECTIVE / AMBITION	ACTIONS	TIMING
<b>SIX:</b>  <b>A STRONG LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY AND CATERING</b>	<b>Promote diversity and use Middlesbrough's local resources to create more sustainable food in the town.</b>	6.1 Identify all local suppliers, split into product groups: dairy; fruit and vegetables; meat, etc. Ensure that production / seasonal calendars and activity levels are investigated to test sustainability.	June 2015 onwards
		6.2 Investigate purchasing networks that link into local produce, production and suppliers; involve mainstream suppliers.	June 2015 onwards
		6.3 Promote all findings to all companies in the local area, both large and small, including through websites, flyers and emails.	April 2015 onwards
	<b>Help local businesses and settings to procure and provide healthy and sustainable food to boost local prosperity and keep value in the local economy.</b>	6.4 Develop ways of promoting local suppliers and their produce to increase the availability of sustainable food.	Under consideration
		6.5 Promote the importance of Food4Health across the town to increase take up.	April 2015 onwards
		6.6 Promote the great produce available locally and include themed events such as Farmers' Markets, Town Meal and Christmas events. Link to local production and seasonal calendar: "What's Available Now".	April 2015 onwards
	<b>Making it easier for local residents to have better access to land, buildings and other resources to take responsibility and control over their food.</b>	6.7 Identify and publish a list of land areas that can be used by local communities for food growing.	April to October 2015
		6.8 Publish a list of buildings that can be utilized by the local communities to increase the availability of healthy and sustainable food. e.g. cooking, retail, catering, food banks, training.	April to October 2015
		6.9 Arrange events to promote the new ventures and get buy in from the public in each area. Promote the ownership and benefits of each scheme.	October 2015 onwards

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

## HOW WE WILL MEASURE PROGRESS

ACTIVITY	TIMING	COORDINATOR
7.1 Maintain a Food Partnership with at least 4 meetings a year:	October 2014 onwards	Food Partnership
7.2 Publish an action plan with theme lead officers and an annual review of achievements and learning.	April 2015 to March 2016	Food Partnership
7.3 Maintain a Food Charter and People's Pledge scheme with annual review of each.	April 2015	Food Partnership
7.4 Create a balanced scorecard using locally set criteria to enable Middlesbrough to measure progress towards being a more healthy and sustainable food town.	September 2015	Middlesbrough Environment City
7.5 Join the Food Sustainable Cities Network and assess the benefits of the national accreditation scheme.	April to October 2015	Middlesbrough Environment City
7.6 Contribute to the achievement of One Planet Living aims and the Health and Well-being Strategy.	April to September 2015	Food Partnership
7.7 Undertake a town wide sample survey of residents to establish a baseline and potential barriers to change towards more healthy / affordable / sustainable food.	Check planned Council survey programmes e.g. Voice Over Panel	Food Partnership

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

## Middlesbrough People's Food Pledge

We want Middlesbrough to be a place where local people can eat good quality, healthy food that is easy to buy, offers value for money and that is produced locally wherever possible. The Middlesbrough Food Partnership, led by Middlesbrough Environment City, is producing a plan to help local people make good choices about food.

We are asking local people to sign up to this Food Pledge and try to make small changes to their food habits. We know that good food is essential for a good quality of life and a healthy lifestyle.

Our ambitions include making sure we can all access quality food at affordable prices, whether we buy it or grow it ourselves. We want to reduce and recycle the packaging our food comes in, reduce the amount of food we waste and make sure that the food we buy is produced in a fair way and helps local businesses and producers.

If you are able to do at least one or more of the ambitions listed below, then you will be doing something really positive to ensure that Middlesbrough has great food, a great environment, great places to buy and eat food, and most importantly healthy local people.

Thank You

### How you can help

1. Try to eat a healthy diet – we can provide you with training to cook your healthy food as cheaply as possible.
2. Recycle packaging – try to buy food that doesn't have lots of packaging with it. If there is packaging left over, please check your recycling guide/Council website to see what materials can be placed in your blue lidded bin for recycling.
3. Don't cook more than you need – try to cook the right amount of food so you are not wasting your money on left over food. If you do have food left over try to re-use it, put it in the right waste bin or compost if appropriate.
4. Buy Fairtrade items – look for the logo. 
5. Buy food that is produced local to Middlesbrough (within 50 miles). It means the food hasn't been transported a long way (damaging the environment) and helps support the local economy.
6. Grow your own food – it's a great way of being outdoors, can save you money and you don't need lots of space. We can run courses to help you do this.
7. Use local shops to help support the local economy, local jobs and the local community.
8. Ask your employer, school or local community organisations to support the work of the Food Partnership and sign up to the Middlesbrough Food Charter.



# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

## Middlesbrough Food Charter

This Food Charter is intended to bring together people, community groups, businesses and policy makers to set the local priorities, shared values and ambitions for local food.

The choices that we all make about food have far reaching consequences on health, the environment and the prosperity of the town. Good food is vital for a good quality of life and long term well-being. A particular concern is the difficulty some residents have in accessing healthy and affordable food, often referred to as 'food poverty'. By supporting this Charter you will be helping to ensure that food is treated as a valuable resource where the production, supply and consumption of food in Middlesbrough is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable in support of the One Planet Middlesbrough principles.

Everyone who lives in, works in and visits Middlesbrough has the opportunity to endorse this Charter. This involves a commitment to support at least one of the six themes or ambitions which are:



### 1. Health and Nutrition

- Ensure more local people eat a nutritious, balanced diet and improve access to affordable healthy food.
- Help more local people make better informed food choices.
- Encourage local businesses to provide safe, healthy and sustainable food to promote the well-being of their customers.

### 2. Local and Sustainable Food

- Support town-wide initiatives that bring people and businesses together and help them increase the availability and consumption of good food.
- Support food production that protects the environment and reduces Middlesbrough's ecological footprint.
- Maximise the use of land for food growing and help local people to produce and eat more healthy affordable food.

### 3. Reducing Food Waste

- Help residents and businesses to minimise, recycle and compost food waste, either individually or collectively.
- Encourage people to buy food with minimal and recyclable packaging to work towards zero waste.

### 4. Fairness in the Food Chain and Tackling Food Poverty

- Promote Middlesbrough's Fairtrade programme to ensure workers in the food chain are treated fairly with fair pay and working conditions.
- Ensure that Middlesbrough's approach to sustainable food gives priority to tackling food poverty and access to affordable healthy food for all.

### 5. Education and Skills

- Give everyone the opportunity to learn about animal welfare, farming, good food and how to grow and cook it.
- Inspire and enable the local community to improve the local food culture so that more residents have access to training and healthy affordable food.

### 6. A Strong Local Food Economy and Catering

- Promote diversity and use Middlesbrough's local resources to create more sustainable food in the town.
- Help local businesses and settings to procure and provide healthy and sustainable food to boost local prosperity and keep value in the local economy.
- Make it easier for local people to have access to land, buildings and other resources to take responsibility and control over their food.

# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

## Middlesbrough Food Charter

### How local organisations can help

- Buy locally produced food to reduce transport related emissions and support the local economy.
- Serve healthy, seasonal and fairly traded food.
- Compost food waste and recycle green waste.
- Recycle packaging – try to buy food that doesn't have lots of packaging with it. If there is packaging left over, please consult your recycling guide / Council website to see if the material can be placed in your blue lidded bin for recycling.
- Buy Fairtrade food if the food is not produced locally – look for the accreditation logo. 
- Encourage your customers and employees to:
  - o Reduce food waste.
  - o Support local shops and retailers in the town – this keeps money in the local economy.
  - o Grow their own food at home or in an allotment or community garden.
  - o Eat healthily by cutting down on the amount of added sugar and salt.
  - o Eat less meat and more fresh fruit and vegetables.
  - o Take physical exercise regularly to reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease and cancer.
  - o Read the labels on food to buy healthy, locally produced and Fairtrade food.

- Looking through your business plans to see if you can do more to help.
- Support 'One Planet Middlesbrough' to help protect the 'environment and save money. By doing so you will also be supporting public health priorities.

### Consider the broader challenges

- Food accounts for 25% of the town's ecological footprint.
- 50% of food is imported into the UK. Affordable food will become scarcer as the world population grows which will harm low income households first.
- Food will become more expensive unless communities grow more locally.
- Climate change and declining natural resources will have an adverse impact on food production
- Ill health and poor diets costs the NHS over £8 billion each year.
- Annual food waste in the UK stands at £420 per household per year.
- An effective local food framework will improve the local economy, create more local wealth and help local businesses prosper.



# Middlesbrough Food Action Plan 2015/16

The **Middlesbrough** Food Action Plan 2015/16 has been published on behalf of Middlesbrough Food Partnership by Middlesbrough Environment City.

The Food Partnership includes: Middlesbrough Council, Middlesbrough Environment City, Askham Bryan College, Middlesbrough College, Teesside University, Thirteen Group, John Paul Centre and Middlesbrough Foodbank.

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