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Clarity Walk CIC

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Contents

Vision	1
Achievements	2
Why Clarity Walk was set up	3
Clarity Walk services	4
Why Clarity Walk is needed	9
Effects of Clarity Walk	10
Referral partners	11
Clarity Walk Case Study and feedback	12
Other achievements	20
6 Week programs	21
Successful grant outcomes	22
Statutory documents and staff roles	23
Future of Clarity Walk	24

Clarity Walk Vision

Clarity Walk is a social enterprise (SC640285) based in the Highlands which aims to improve mental health and wellbeing through No-Phone nature walks and activites. In a world that is so disconnected right now we want to support communities by bringing people together through walking and talking in local green spaces.

We want to build communities that are more connected, resilient and physically active for improved mental health and wellbeing.

We want to dramatically reduce isolation, stress and loneliness by providing a support network every single day so people are never left alone and struggling as they know they can walk and talk with someone using our services.

We want to teach people how to lower stress, reduce distraction and use their time more positively by providing more phone free time and education with our services.

With the impact Clarity Walk creates we do not want to limit it to the Highlands and we aim to expand across Scotland through a franchising model, and then the UK.

Clarity Walk will continue to adapt and support people when they need us most.

Over the next 5 years we want to:

- Support 10000 people to improve their wellbeing using our in-person and online services
- Become recognised as one of the leading wellbeing providers for walking in Scotland
- Expand to over 18 locations with franchising to support more communities



Achievements

From August 2019 - May 2021 we have achieved the following:

- Were able to provide over 520 No-Phone nature walks for the Inverness area with walks for all abilities, including walks for those with mobility restrictions.
- Reached over 460 different people who joined a Clarity Walk to help them reduce stress and anxiety, build social connections and become more physically active through walking and talking.
- Supported over 40 children working with primary schools and parents to reduce anxiety, build connections and discover nature through nature based learning and forest activities.
- Helped 6 people return to work after been signed off for mental health issues.
- Helped 5 people recover from drug and alcohol issues using our walks in collaboration with the Salvation Army
- Referred by GP practices, counsellors and mental health charities who recognise the health benefits of our walks. Referrals receive free membership to remove the financial barrier to join.
- Provided volunteering opportunities to 15 people as walk leaders.
- Featured on BBC news, BBC Alba's Ioneliness in Scotland series and the Michelle Mcmanus show
- Created over 25 virtual walks during Lockdown to help people experience the sights and sounds of nature which helped to lower stress and encourage exercise in nature.
- Presented 15 times educating people about technologies impact on mental health and how to manage it. This included High Schools, Lifescan, Santander Bank and UHI.
- Created an online series for schools about mental health and technology which educates children about the issues with phones/social media and how to manage them for their health.

In 2021 we aim to:

- ⇒ Help over 1000 different people reconnect and improve their mental health
- Help 15 people return back to work after been signed off for mental health issues
- ⇒ Provide 15 volunteering opportunities in the Highlands
- Franchise to 2 to other areas across Scotland
- Collaborate with 5 different charities to help their users improve their mental health





Why Clarity Walk was set up

My name is Matthew Wallace and I am the founder of Clarity Walk. My background is in fitness and health and I have been working as a personal trainer for the last six years. In 2017, I suffered with depression as I became very lonely; I couldn't exercise due to injuries and I was constantly on my phone wasting time and comparing myself to others.

Everyday was a constant battle against myself with low motivation, low mood and overwhelming sadness, including suicidal thoughts but a holiday with friends was the intervention I needed. It reminded me what it was like to be happy again and I knew I needed to look at what was affecting me to make changes that would improve my mental well-being.

I made a conscious effort to spend less time on my phone so it was no longer controlling my mood and making me waste hours each day. I regularly went on nature walks to help me slow down, enjoy exercise pain-free and to help me clear my head. Every day I made an effort to connect with people in-person rather than just online.

All of this helped me improve my mental health and I started to feel happier again to enjoy life. Over time I refined my methods to help me stay in control of my mental health and get the most out of each day.

In August 2019 I decided to use my methods to help people break away from their phone and experience the healing effects of nature to improve their mental health and wellbeing. That is when I created the UK's first No Phone nature walk and founded the social enterprise Clarity Walk CIC in Inverness.

Since then Clarity Walk has rapidly grown to become a staple service in the Highlands that people can depend on to reduce stress, feel more positive and connect with others regularly in a safe environment. These walks have been essential for many of our members during the 2020 pandemic with many describing them as a "lifeline".

I am truly passionate about the work we do at Clarity Walk and I will continually work hard and improve this service to help more people in the Highlands and eventually across the UK.







Clarity Walk

Clarity Walk is an hour 'no phone' nature walk to disconnect from technology and reconnect with others, nature and yourself. It is a non-judgemental, friendly experience which is open to all, including dogs and young people. It is an opportunity to simply walk and talk without the intrusion of digital devices to allow people to feel connected, calm, relaxed and in the present moment.

There is a walk for all abilities including an "Inclusive" walk for those with mobility restrictions. The walks are specified by levels so walkers can choose a walk that suits their ability. The levels included are:

- The Inclusive walk for those with physical disabilities.
- ⇒ Flat walks.
- Flat to moderate walks which are mostly flat walks with one or two hills.
- Moderate walks include hills and potentially rough terrain.
- Steep walks include steep hills throughout.

Based in Inverness, Highlands Clarity Walk currently runs 13 walks per week using a variety of beautiful walking routes which anyone is welcome to join. Walks are led by paid staff and volunteers. There is also a 1 to 1 walk service available, as well as transport to access walks.

Prior to booking a walk, those attending must complete a 'Wellness Questionnaire' which ensures they are safe to walk, and also provides measurable data which is compared at a later date to see if the attendee has benefited from attending the walks.

With Clarity Walk the outcome for those that attend our walks are:

- Reduce anxiety
- Reduce isolation
- Improve confidence
- Build a positive support and social network
- Improve physical wellbeing

Which leads to improvements in their quality of life.

Memberships with Clarity Walk are £7-15p/m but those referred by GPs, counsellors and mental health charities partnered with Clarity Walk receive free memberships.(see page 6)





Clarity Cleanup

Clarity Cleanup is a 60-90 minute walk to restore the beauty of local nature spots by removing rubbish, dog poo bags and unsightly items that affect the environment.

Using high quality refuse bags and litter picking sticks we collect several bags each session making a large impact which encourages other community members to get involved.

Locations chosen are chosen by the community and we organise a different location every week to provide variety for volunteers and improve all local areas.

Since April 2021 we have managed to collect 3500L of rubbish from local nature spots.



Clarity Kids

Clarity kids walks are 90 minute forest adventures to allow children to escape from technology to have fun, learn new skills and connect with other children through nature based activities and education.

This includes forest yoga, forest education, scavenger hunts, therapeutic arts and crafts and fun nature games so children can enjoy exploring the outdoors without their phone/tech.

This has helped children to reduce anxiety, improve confidence, build teambuilding skills and improve learner engagement for both the home and school environment.

We work privately with parents and we currently work with children with additional support needs/ delayed learning from Cauldeen primary, Crown primary and Drummond school.



Clarity Kids allows kids to be themselves without judgement so they can try, fail and try again to build confidence



Sessions are supportive of each and every child to ensure enjoyment, learning and connection.





Digital Detox Daycations

Digital Detox Daycations provide a whole day escape from technology to completely switch off, feel less distracted and become more connected to nature.

They involve hiking through beautiful Highland landscapes, therapeuitc arts and crafts, tours and a catered lunch to ensure a great experience.

This is offered to the community, our members and corporate workplaces.













Virtual Services

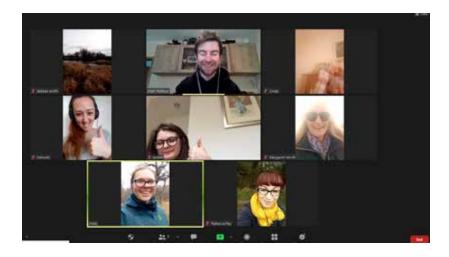
During the 2020 pandemic Clarity Walk developed virtual services to continue to support the community of the Highlands but also expand our reach across Scotland.

These services included Virtual Walk relaxations and our Walk and Talk sessions.

Walk and Talk sessions

This is a 45-60 minute group walk experience using zoom video call which allows people to walk in nature whilst speaking to another group member using their phone. Group members talk in groups of 2-3 people for 10 minutes and are then rotated to speak with other people within the group to help build connections.

This helps to bring people together from multiple areas at one time to reduce stress and isolation, build connections and help people become more active.



Virtual walk relaxation

This is a 15-20 minute virtual walk that takes people through a beautiful location to allow them to see the sights and sounds of nature from their home. This helps to completely switch off, relax and increase motivation to walk in nature.

One viewer said that they managed to fall asleep using one of our virtual walks which is a positive outcome. Click the button below to view one of our videos.

Virtual relaxation video





Why Clarity Walk is needed

- According to the NHS (2018) there are 58 suicides per year in the highlands. This number is likely to be significantly higher during the pandemic. By attending Clarity Walk, this offers distraction and peer support for those battling suicidal thoughts, by encouraging reduced use of technology, and connecting with Nature and others. Those attending who are particularly struggling, are signposted to specific services and groups.
- → A literature review (Swinson, Wenborn & Sugarhood, 2019) of eight studies on mental health outcomes from green space walks, identified that walks were reported to increase connections with others and nature, as well as providing a sense of freedom. Clarity Walk encourages 'no phone' group walks outdoors for social interactions in a relaxed environment whilst noticing the five senses to engage with the surroundings.¹
- According to the Attention Restoration Theory as reviewed by Pearson and Craig (2014) urban environments force people to use their attention to overcome constant stimulation of ever-changing sights and sounds such as digital devices. Over time this leads to cognitive fatigue and poorer concentration. Whereas in a natural environment captures attention whilst providing feelings of pleasure. It can provide a sense of escapism from stressful demands of modern day life and can reset attention for improved performance in attention demanding tasks. Clarity Walk allows people to experience nature without a digital device with members reporting improved concentration, focus and mood after one walk.
- All types of green exercise activities also improve self-esteem and negative mood subscales, such as tension, anger and depression.'² We are a Society with high anxiety, so being able to just build a little time in daily to practise self-care, and to complete a no phone walk, would reap huge benefits. Clarity Walk offers this structure with the five scheduled walks a week which are available for perusal in advanc





¹ NHS Highland. (2018). Suicide Prevention in NHS Highland . NHS Highland Board . 4.2

² Swinson, T., Wenborn, J., & Sugarhood, P. (2019). Green walking groups: A mixed-methods review of the mental health outcomes for adults with mental health problems. British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 0308022619888880.

³ Pearson et Craig (2014). The great outdoors? Exploring the mental health benefits of natural environments. Available: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01178/full. Last accessed 4th October 2020.

⁴ Barton J, Hine R, Pretty J: The health benefits of walking in greenspaces of high natural and heritage value. J Integrate Environment Science. 2009, 6 (4): 261-278.

The Effects of Clarity Walk

- ⇒ From the recorded feedback, we know the walks are proving help to combat loneliness, depression and anxiety. There are noticeable improvements in behavior and attitude, noted by those who attend, and their friends and family. Those with mobility issues have recorded how attending the gentle paced 'inclusive' walks have improved their stamina, and they are now able to walk further than they did prior to commencing the walks. Some feedback from those attending are located on the next page to confirm the importance of Clarity Walk, and the positive effects recorded.
- ⇒ GPs have recognised the health benefits of the Clarity Walks with Kingsmills medical practice being the first medical practice to refer the walks to their patients. Clarity Walks are also refered by NHS social, GPs, counsellos and mental health charities. Many other organisations such as pharmacies, support groups, and the Citizen Advice Bureau, now signpost patients/ clients to Clarity Walk if they feel the walks would be beneficial. This can be due to the gentle pace of our Inclusive group to improve stamina and mobility, or through the peer support from those attending the walks to combat loneliness, or through being able to connect with others in nature to relax the mind.



Our Referral Partners

At Clarity Walk we believe it is important to form strong relationships with community organisations to help people in each community. That is why are building referral partnerships with health care and mental health organisations.

Our referral partners can refer a patient/client to Clarity Walk to receive a free membership with us and benefit from our service which removes the financial barrier to join. Becoming a referral partner is free.

Our referral partners include:

- NHS Social Inverness West and East
- Moira Finlayson GP
- Kingsmills Medical Practice
- Addiction Councelling Inverness
- Befrienders Highland
- Salvation Army
- Mikeysline



Stacey Lumsden

Below is the feedback received from our regular walk attendee, Stacey, for the period 18th September 2019 until the 9th January 2020. Clarity Walk requests that every person participating in Clarity Walk completes a Wellness Questionnaire prior to their first walk. We then send out another Wellness Questionnaire after 6 weeks roughly to assess the effects of Clarity Walk on the person's wellbeing, and to gather data. The ratings on this Questionnaire are out of 10 with zero out of 10 being the worst, and 10 out of 10 being the best.

NAME	LIFE ASPECT	RATING 28 TH SEPT 2019	RATING 9 TH JAN 2020
Stacey Lumsden	Quality of Life	2 out of 10	9 out of 10
	Quality of Happiness	2 out of 10	9 out of 10
	Quality of Diet	2 out of 10	6 out of 10
	Total days able to exercise a week	2 days	7 days

Stacey also advised Matthew at Clarity Walk that she manages her anxiety using the walks and that she was now on a fifth of the medication that General Practitioners (GPs) expected her to need. This is an incredible result and speaks volumes about just how successful Clarity Walk is for improving your Well- being. Stacey also advised us that she was able to return to work after being signed off sick due to poor mental health, within 4 months, which was earlier than predicted by both her GP and counsellor.

You can listen to Stacey's story here:

https://youtu.be/aJzWvyN3u0Y





John Marr

Below is the feedback received from our regular walk attendee and now director, John for the period 4th July 2020 until the 19th November 2020. John is a retired paramedic. John was referred to use Clarity Walk by Active Health workers from Cairn Medical Practice. John attends the walks 2–3 times per week.

NAME	LIFE ASPECT	RATING 4 th JULY 2020	RATING 19 th NOV 2020
John Marr	Quality of Life	5 out of 10	10 out of 10
	Sleep	6 out of 10	8 out of 10
	Quality of Diet	3 out of 10	3 out of 10
	Total days able to exercise a week	2 days	3 days

Feedback

"I was referred by Active Link health workers to use Clarity Walk. Within a couple of months my mood was significantly better and I was feeling healthier using the walks. I have found the accountability of booking walks has really helped to motivate me to become more physically active and become fitter.

I recently completed a 10 mile walk with Clarity Walk and I haven't done a 10 mile walk since I left the Army 30 years ago.

Now I am a director with the company and helping other people who struggle with mental health difficulties which I find really fulfilling.





Linda Morton

Below is the feedback received from our regular walk attendee, Linda for the period 5th June 2020 until the 19th November 2020. Linda is a lecturer who is recently divorced after a 50 year marriage and was experiencing immense feelings of loneliness. Linda uses the walks to meet people regularly to feel less isolated and connect with others regularly. Linda attends the walks 3-4 times per week.

NAME	LIFE ASPECT	RATING 28 th JUNE 2020	RATING 23 rd SEP 2020
Linda Morton	Quality of Life	5 out of 10	7 out of 10
	Confidence		8 out of 10
	Quality of Diet	5 out of 10	6 out of 10
	Total days able to exercise a week	6 days	6 days

Feedback

"I have never been so down in my life as I was when I started Clarity walks and I am not being dramatic to say that it has been a life saver.

As I said on one of my early walks to another walker this has literally saved my life I was that depressed and lonely when I started. The inclusive non judgmental people I have met have reduced my feeling of isolation enormously. One of the best things about the walks is that there is one every day. No day will come when I am really low without the chance to walk and talk in nature. I will never have to sit isolated and alone. This happened only about a week ago and I felt enormously bucked up by the morning walk and able to face the rest of the day. I cant thank you all enough for this service you are my heroes."





Jenifer Barton

Below is the feedback received from our regular walk attendee, Jenifer for the period 28th June 2020 until the 23rd September 2020. Jenifer is retired and currently cares for her exhusband who suffers from dementia which can be very stressful. Jenifer uses the walks for her own wellbeing but also uses the walks for her ex-husband to give her much needed respite. jenifer attends the walks 5 times per week.

NAME	LIFE ASPECT	RATING 28 th JUNE 2020	RATING 23 rd SEP 2020
Jenifer Barton	Quality of Life	5 out of 10	7 out of 10
	Confidence		8 out of 10
	Quality of Diet	5 out of 10	6 out of 10
	Total days able to exercise a week	6 days	6 days

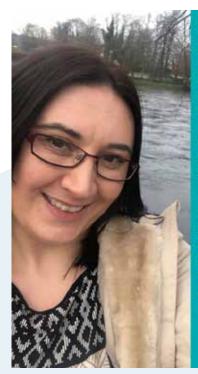
Feedback

"My life has changed completely since joining Clarity Walks!! The freedom to be myself and not be judged with the walks. Getting out into nature is something that gives me a sense of peace.in a time that is so hectic. The walks have honestly been a lifesaver for both myself and Ken and we don't know what we would have done without them"





Clarity Walk Feedback



"I was signed off work for anxiety and depression and Clarity Walk has made such a difference to my life over recent months. It has given me a sense of purpose and some time for me. Time to relax from the stresses of a demanding job and time to reconnect with nature and other people.

It's great to meet new non-judgemental people and have open conversations where I can share and talk about anything and everything. It doesn't have to be my mental health.

This initiative is the reason I am still here, even at my worst moment and darkest thoughts the walks have gotten me through.

Clarity walk is the reason I am now back at work and is the reason I want to share my story to help others.

- Stacey





"The benefits of being off my phone for an hour and interacting with others in nature has had great positive effects on me.

After the walks, I feel refreshed and more energized. The activity brings me back into the present moment, where I feel more centred and ready to take on my day.

- Greg









"I like meeting new people & I like to go for coffee afterwards. It helps me do things other people do which makes me happy.

It makes me happy when there are dogs on the walks or when we meet dogs during the walk.

The walks are making my legs stronger & I think my doctor will be very pleased with me next time I see him."

Inclusive Walks





"Clarity walks are an excellent excuse to leave your phone behind. Fabulous for meeting people, getting out in the fresh air and improving your general wellbeing.

As a Counsellor not only do I experience and take part in the walks myself but I recommend them to my clients too. Combining their psychological and physical well-being."

- Ruth Webster, Counsellor









"A great walking group where both myself and my son were made to feel very welcome.

A good way to discover new areas and enjoy being outdoors with great company.

Coffee and cake after is an added bonus "

-Shona





I had just moved close to Inverness from East Anglia and I really didn't know anyone. I happened to meet Matt and he told me about the Clarity Walks he had started. I felt my whole world lighten hearing about them.

I've been going almost every week since sometimes even twice a week. I've met some great people, I feel happier, I have a new sense of confidence in myself and I have even lost weight!

- Simone









Other achievements

Clarity Walk has managed to attract over 4000 attendees to the Clarity Walks since 6th August 2019 through to 26th May 2020, attracting a wide age range from young children to the older generation. High participation highlights the appeal of nature and the outdoors for all ages, as well as the need for 'no phone' time among all. View the table below for a variety of achievements.

Achievement	Date
Featured on BBC news for mental health and nature	11/05/2021
NHS Social Inverness west agreed to become a referral partner	14/12/2020
Featured on BBC Alba Loneliness in Scotland series	10/12/2020
Approval for Highland Council Common good fund to continue walk program with the Salvation Army	24/11/2020
Kingsmills medical practice formall agree to refer patients	09/10/2020
Created online series for schools with Highland Council to help kids manage technology for their mental health	23/09/2020
Approval for Think Health Think Nature Fund to work with 3 charities on a 6 week walk program	15/09/2020
Approval for Cairn housing grant for marketing	26/08/2020
Approval for Highland Council resilience grant for marketing	28/05/2020
Approval for MFR Cash for Kids project funding to deliver walks and presentations to schools	11/02/2020





6 Week Programs

Clarity Walk provides 6 week programs to charities and organisations to improve mental wellbeing, build connection and encourage physical activity with the end goal of participants joining our community walks for ongoing support.

Clarity Walk has worked with 2 charities so far with this program:

Salvation Army program: A walking program designed to help those recovering from drug and alcohol issues by providing a healthy support network and a positive alternative to drug and alcohol use.

According to Debbie Smith from the Salvation Army the project has helped service users dramatically decrease anxiety, stop panic attacks, feel happier, become more relaxed and meet new supportive people to help them in their recovery.

Befrienders Highland program: A walking program designed to reduce isolation and improve mental wellbeing through connection in nature.

According to Susan White from Befrienders Highland the project has helped service users reduce anxiety, feel less isolated and feel connected in nature.



Successful funding project

Think Health Think Nature

We were awarded a grant of £3300 from Think Health Think Nature on 15th September 2020 to work with 2 local charities for a 6 week walk project.

The aim of the walk program was to reduce anxiety, reduce loneliness and encourage physical activity through walking and talking without the distraction of the phone.

Charities selected were the Salvation Army and Befrienders Highland

18 walk sessions were delivered during the program reaching 12 different people

Project outcomes:

Participants felt that the main things they achieved from the program were

- Reduction in stress and anxiety (80%)
- Were able to meet new people (100%)
- Increase physical activity (100%)
- Support drug and alcohol recovery (100%)

This project has resulted in continued work with the Salvation Army on a weekly basis.

Participant quotes:

"Clarity Walk gives me a reason to leave the house each week which really helps. I am now not using the substance i was previously taking because of the walk. I have enjoyed being able to talk with people who understand addiction with no judgement. "

"My anxiety has reduced now to a manageable level. I now have a positive mindset. Confidence is growing by the day (no racing thoughts) I have reduced to an extremely low dose of prescribed medication (subotone) which is the lowest i have ever been on in 16 years and the walks have helped this. I have a more positive relationship with my daughter now that I can think clearer and my sleep has gradually improved too."

"I found the Clarity Walks quite exhilarating! educational! inspirational! providing a general sense of enriched wellbeing."





Successful funding project

Cash For Kids

We were awarded a grant of £2200 from Cash for Kids in March 2020.

Our original plan was to deliver several mental health and tech presentations and No Phone Nature Walks to Four schools in the Inverness area. The aim of this was to encourage children of the schools to engage in exercise/nature walks/positive activities with their peers whilst managing their phones and tech more positively for their mental health. This was potentially going to reach 3789 children from the selected schools.

Unfortunately we could not deliver this due to the pandemic.

However, with the permission of Lyndsay Rose we worked with Eliz Macintosh and Robert Quigley from Highland Council Child Protection to develop an online mental health and tech series called

"You and Techonology"

This consists of five 15-20 minute episodes which cover:

- Awareness of tech use and screen time
- Effects of social media and TV reality
- Perception of body image
- Online safety and Online bullying
- How to manage social media to reduce compulsive use
- How to improve online communication
- How to set boundaries to build healthy habits
- Alternatives to tech use

These lessons are particularly important because children have spent more time using technology which has impacted their mental health and tech habits due to lockdown.

This series is currently being tested and scheduled to be piloted across all Highland schools.

Feedback from children so far has been very positive.





Statutory Documents:

All statutory documents required for the daily operations of Clarity Walk CIC, including Policy documents, can be found on the Clarity Walk CIC website by using the link below:

www.claritywalk.co.uk/policies

Staff Roles:

- Directors; responsibilities include but are not limited to; determining and implementing policies, decision making, monitoring day to day running's of the enterprise, managing accounts, completing statutory paperwork, overseeing projects, and managing staff.
- Administrator; responsible for identifying and applying for funding, and helping to arrange funding events to support Clarity Walk's vital work. The administrator also undertakes any other tasks requiring completion such as creating information sheets and detailing projects and outcomes.
- ➡ Walk Leaders; responsible for leading and managing walks when Matthew is unable to attend. Walk Leaders lead the walks and support members attending the walks if required. They are aware of risk assessments and attend any training required.



Future of Clarity Walk:

Clarity Walk will endeavour to continue to work on the current Projects detailed, with a variety of personnel and services. We will continue to assess and monitor the effects of Clarity Walk among all ages and backgrounds. We aim to continue reaching out to more of the community, especially as Inverness contains well documented areas of deprivation, both among the general public and schools.

We at Clarity Walk are committed to improving the well- being of many in the Highlands, and in turn, making a positive impact on society. We have targets set in order to increase the growth of Clarity Walk CIC by reaching a wider audience, and to ensure its continued success.

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

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