

An Open Welcome

Making your pub accessible for customers



British Beer and Pub Association

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Section 1: Introduction and Foreword

Introduction by Chris Veitch

Pubs are places where everyone is welcome. It's where family, friends and colleagues come together and where tourists to this country feel they will see the true, welcoming Britain.

But sometimes, without realising it, we erect barriers to that welcome, especially for those who are disabled or less mobile. If a customer can't access a pub, bar or restaurant then they will go elsewhere. That means that all their family, friends and colleagues will go elsewhere as well. Not only is the business lost but the customer's experience is zero or even negative.

This guide is a reminder that accessibility and inclusion is not just about complying with the law, it's about putting the customer - every customer - at the heart of your business. If we can understand the experience of our disabled visitors then not only are we doing what is right, we are doing what is right for our business, and being the truly welcoming places that we are renowned for around the world.

Introduction from Chris Veitch. Government Disability Champion for the Tourism Sector and Vice Chair of Tourism For All

Foreword by Ed Warner

I'm delighted to see the British Beer & Pub Association publish this guidance, giving tips on how to improve access in pubs across the UK.

Much has changed since the publication of the last guide, as businesses have woken up to the scale of the demand and the opportunities for increased revenues by making their venues more accessible to everyone.

Over the past three years I've seen a number of pubs embed good accessible design principles into the refurbishment of bedrooms and communal areas. This has increased their reach to an audience which is currently badly underserved and in doing so, has resulted in more bookings, greater loyalty and a proven return on investment.

Refreshingly, there has been a growing acceptance that accessible spaces can be designed without compromising on aesthetics. For too long accessible bedrooms, bathrooms and communal toilets have looked clinical in their appearance and second best. With greater numbers of more affordable, well designed

and accessible products now available on the market, operators are realising that function can be blended with form to create beautiful accessible environments.

There has never been a better opportunity for pubs to open their doors to customers with a disability. I look forward to seeing a number of pubs use this guide as a tool to make our community's best loved asset accessible to everyone.

Foreword from Ed Warner, Government Disability Champion for the design of 'spaces & products' and co-founder of Motionspot.

Section 2: Employment of people with disabilities

Introduction

Over seven million people of working age in the UK are disabled or have a health condition¹. There has historically been a significant gap between the proportion of disabled people employed compared with non-disabled people.

Employers should consider that employing disabled people is not only important to reduce this gap, but there is also a strong business case for doing so.

- Having a disabled employee will create a workforce that reflects the diverse range of customers in your community.
- You can benefit from additional skills such as the ability to use British Sign Language (BSL).
- Encouraging applications from those living with disabilities will increase the number of high quality applicants available.
- Having a disabled member of your team will increase the confidence of team members around disabled people.

Department for Work and Pensions: Being a Disability Confident employer

“The Disability Confident scheme has been developed by business, the government and disabled people’s representatives to help employers make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to your workplace. It’s free to join and as a member you will have access to information, support and guidance, to help you tap into this huge talent pool.” To find out more and to sign up, visit the [Government disability confident website](#).

Acas guidance: Protecting your staff & customers with 'reasonable adjustments'

Reasonable adjustments remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled people. Employers should make sure policies and practices do not put disabled people at a disadvantage. The costs of making reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled employees are often low and not too challenging to implement.

A reasonable adjustment will depend on the circumstance of each individual case, and includes a number of factors: is the adjustment practical to make?; does the employer have the resources to pay for it?; will the adjustment be effective at overcoming or reducing the disadvantage in the workplace? More information can be found on the [Acas website](#).

Statistic: Nearly 20% of the working age population in the UK reported that they had a disability.¹

Employment of people with disabilities case studies:

Acas advice on Neurodiversity in the workplace

Neurodiversity is a term referring to the different ways in which the brain can work and interpret information. It is estimated that around 1 in 7 people are neurodivergent. Neurodivergence includes Attention Deficit Disorders, Autism, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia.

Acas has produced a number of videos highlighting how employers can make simple adjustments to support those who are neurodivergent. Kate who has ADHD highlights that, when given the flexibility in hours at work, she will always be working at her best. People with ADHD are often good at completing urgent or physically demanding tasks, pushing through setbacks and showing a passion for their work, which Kate discusses in her video. For more

information on neurodiversity and to view these videos visit the [Acas website](#).

Narcolepsy: understanding its symptoms

Narcolepsy is a rare disability whose symptoms are not widely recognised. It is estimated that 30,000 people in the UK have narcolepsy, including Scott, the landlord of the Fox and Hounds in Dorset. For Scott, being a landlord with narcolepsy has meant that he works particular hours to ensure that he has time to rest between his shifts, and also avoids working in the kitchen which can be dangerous.

Narcolepsy is a chronic neurological disorder which leads to excessive daytime sleepiness along with cataplexy, a temporary involuntary loss of muscle control usually in response to strong emotions, causing a person with narcolepsy to appear drunk or on drugs. Narcolepsy UK have found a number of incidences where this has happened and the person has been removed from the pub despite informing the pub about their narcolepsy.

Scott would recommend that other landlords are aware of the disability. If someone shows symptoms such as these, they should check with friends and family first before taking any action, and ensure that the symptoms of this disability are fully understood by the entire pub team. More information on Narcolepsy can be found on the [Narcolepsy UK website](#).

Section 3: Staff awareness

Introduction

With pubs at the heart of British hospitality, it is important to ensure that all staff are trained to understand the importance of having an open and accessible pub for all customers, including those with disabilities.

Training should focus on a number of key issues, including:

- Helping staff to serve disabled customers in a friendly and confident manner
- The importance of disabled customers to the UK tourism and hospitality industry
- What the law says about providing service to customers with disabilities
- The different types and levels of impairment and how these will impact on their needs
- How language and terminology can cause embarrassment or distress
- How staff can provide high quality service to customers with visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility impairments and specific physical and cognitive impairments
- Things staff should remember in their role when they are welcoming or assisting disabled customers

It's good customer service, but it's also the law

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. Under the Equality Act employers and organisations also have a responsibility to make sure that disabled people can access jobs, education, services as easily as non-disabled people. This is known as the 'duty to make reasonable adjustments'.

Why is training so important? Chris Veitch – Tourism For All

We usually remember those amazing customer experiences when we have them. Often it's the small things that count the most, the feeling that we are being treated as individuals. For some groups of people, such as those who are disabled, less mobile or large multi-generational families, small adjustments such as someone reading a menu out loud, adjusting ingredients in a dish or offering table service can make all the difference.

Pubs are people places. Customers want a warm welcome and staff working in pubs want to offer this. But sometimes gaps between customer expectations and service delivery can arise. This is where good training comes in. It helps us understand the requirements of those who need some extra assistance and how to respond – and provide the great customer service that we want them to have.

Staff awareness case studies:

Dementia Friends - Wadsworth brewery training of staff



Wadworth, the independent family brewer and regional pub operator based in Wiltshire, has got behind Alzheimer's Society's awareness raising initiative, Dementia Friends.

So far 60 Wadworth pub staff have attended Dementia Friends information sessions, and many more are being organised. The sessions have helped them to support their customers living with dementia and their carers, by highlighting the challenges they may face when going out to their local pub. For example, staff are learning how to communicate clearly and assist people to pay for things.

By providing the right support, people affected by dementia are able to do the things they enjoy for longer. Through Dementia Friends, Wadworth pubs are working to ensure everyone can visit their local pub, which helps reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing for people living with dementia and their carers.

Guide Dogs - A community hub for everyone

"Once I find a helpful welcoming establishment, I tend to use this on a regular basis, rather than having the stress of finding somewhere new and risking any unpleasantness" says Alison, guide dog owner. "I realised that there were several guide dog owners that felt isolated and who'd appreciate contact with others. We approached a few pubs who were happy to support our group, but eventually settled on The Royal Cheriton, Folkestone, Kent. Including myself, about eight of us meet every month and have done so for over a year. We feel welcome – the staff are great at assisting us with reading the menus, finding us tables, and helping us get around. Assistance is discreet, and no fuss is made."

Elaine Jenkins, Publican of The Royal Cheriton for 30 years says: "It's great that Alison and her friends find our service helpful and they come back every month for a chat over a few drinks. In this business it's about giving people a warm and friendly experience, regardless of any disability they may have. We like to assist where

we can and ensure customers (with or without assistance dogs) feel welcome and have a good time. My advice to anyone is, introduce yourself, offer assistance and, keep it simple.”

Refusing access to someone with a Guide or Assistance Dog may count as discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 as it means that a person with disabilities cannot access services in the same way that a non-disabled person can.

For further information contact Guidedogs@guidedogs.org.uk or call 0118 9835 555

Section 4: Online information

Producing an Accessibility Guide, by VisitEngland

Every pub should provide clear, honest and up-to-date online information on their website about accessibility. This is an invaluable tool to enable disabled people, their family and friends to enjoy all that the British pub has to offer.

Producing an Accessibility Guide is a great way for pubs to provide potential customers with important accessibility information. The guide enables individuals with accessibility requirements, their family and friends to make informed decisions about where to stay and visit based on their needs. This includes wheelchair users, people with hearing loss, visual impairments, learning disabilities, older people, or families with children.

Publishing an Accessibility Guide can act as a marketing opportunity to broaden the appeal of your pub. Producing a guide will help you to appraise your venue's accessibility under the Equality Act 2010 where you have legal obligations to make reasonable adjustments so that Disabled People can access a building. A guide can also be used by staff as a handy reference document when dealing with enquiries.

VisitEngland and VisitScotland provide a free to use website for the easy production and publication of Accessibility Guides. You can produce a guide by answering a series of questions on your pub's accessibility, uploading useful photos and adding any further information. You will be given a unique web link to promote your guide, which you can add prominently to your website and share across social media channels. Go to the VisitEngland website for more detail.

Statistic: 63% of businesses do not promote the fact they make provisions for guests with access needs.³

Online information case studies:

Euan's Guide: The disabled access review website

Technology has the advantage of making the world more accessible. When the disabled access review charity Euan's Guide was founded, its goal was to make the lives of disabled people much easier by creating a resource they could use to find access information and reviews. The website now has thousands of reviews and listings from places across the UK.

Many barriers exist for disabled people when it comes to taking spontaneous adventures or going on daily outings - including visiting pubs. Here are some tips from Euan's Guide on simple online actions that you can take that will make it easier for disabled people to find great pubs to visit:

- 86% of people have found disabled access information on a venue's website to be misleading, confusing or inaccurate⁴. Make sure your pub doesn't fall into this category by writing detailed information on your venue's accessibility. Consider parking and public transport, your venue's entrance, the main venue space, the toilets and any other facilities. Reviewers also love to see images so that they have a clearer idea of what to expect.
- 53% of those surveyed reported that they would avoid a venue if its disabled access information is not easily available online⁴. Add your accessibility information to your website and make it easy to find - it makes business sense.
- Have information available in alternative formats to make it more accessible.
- Lastly, list your pub on Euan's Guide so that disabled people can find out how great you are and make a visit! It is free and easy to list.

Why St Austell Brewery develop online Accessibility Guides

“Across St Austell Brewery’s pub estate, we make Accessibility Guides to ensure that all of our customers are aware of what to expect when they visit us. Whilst not all of our pubs are completely accessible, we make sure that is clear on our websites so they can make their own judgement. Our guides aren’t just used by those with disabilities, but also older people as well as families with pushchairs.

The Guides provide a range of information, from public transport to car parking, access to property and public areas, toilets and bedrooms”. - Candace Jury, Accommodation Marketing and Revenue Manager

Red Mist pubs – creating Accessibility Guides

Red Mist Leisure’s Accessibility Guides are put together by a team of people who ensure potential obstacles are recognised and solutions are provided where possible; from introducing ramps and handrails, to improving lighting and larger menus.

The level of detail is important in order to cover a variety of abilities and associated challenges. They include details of floor surfaces, colour, table heights, door widths and noise levels in the hope they are of use to all customers, not only those with disabilities. The listed buildings within the group pose new challenges but by having detailed information available, Red Mist want all to feel welcome and safe.

Section 5: Community for everyone

Introduction

Pubs across the country provide a great place for friends and family to meet, socialise, relax and enjoy the great drinks and food which

pubs have to offer. Pubs can also act as a social hub for those with accessibility needs.

Pubs should consider how they can cater to all members of their local community including those with disabilities. This could include quieter periods in the day to appeal to certain members of the community or hosting events for specific local groups.

Case study: Horse and Jockey, a dementia-friendly local

Rebecca, the landlady of an Admiral leased pub, Horse and Jockey in Flintshire, has taken several steps to ensure her pub is welcoming to people affected by dementia. Firstly, she has made her staff Dementia Friends so they have an understanding of dementia and some of the challenges those affected can face. She has assisted customers to identify coins and pay correctly by adding a coin recognition chart beside the till. She has also assisted people to navigate throughout the pub, by using clear signs, placed at key decision making points throughout the pub. For example, to and from the toilets, tables and exits.

“Becoming dementia-friendly has made perfect business sense. Making these adjustments has not only worked to support people with dementia, but ensured my pub is more accessible to everyone.”

Rebecca also uses her pub to host a monthly Memory Café, to support people living with dementia to get out and make friends in a relaxed atmosphere. As secretary and treasurer of Buckley’s Dementia Friendly Community steering group, she is supporting other businesses to take similar steps.

Assistance Dogs in pubs

Assistance dogs are not pets, and thousands of disabled people rely on them to help with day-to-day activities. Not only blind people but also people with hearing loss, epilepsy, diabetes, physical mobility

problems and more have a trained dog which carries out practical tasks and supports their independence and confidence.

Assistance dog owners are protected by the Equality Act 2010 as a person with a disability must not be treated unfavourably because of something connected to their disability. It will almost always not be reasonable for a pub, hotel, restaurant or shop to apply a 'no dogs' policy for assistance dog owners and doing so could amount to unlawful discrimination.

Community for everyone case studies:

Meet N Match Pub Night Out: friendship and dating agency

Meet N Match is a friendship and dating agency for adults with learning disabilities. The project provides opportunities for people to go out and socialise, go on dates and access relationship training, by acting as a safe place for people with a learning disability to meet new people. The Black Dog pub was approached by the organisation, with the first night being hosted in April 2017. At first, only four people attended. Now, up to 30 people attend the event on a monthly basis.

The project has had a positive impact not only on the attendees of the event, but the pub itself. A number of the attendees have greatly benefitted from this event, many of whom have made friends who they regularly meet up with, as well as returning to the pub for other Meet N Match events. Many have started relationships as a result and now receive support from Meet N Match. One of the volunteers with a learning disability has hosted the event on his own leading to full, paid employment.

Meet N Match have used the success of these events at The Black Dog pub to set up other similar ones using the same principle, and are now hosting nights in St Annes and Manchester on a monthly basis.

DICE Social Night at the Hillsborough Club

Proudly working in partnership with The Hillsborough Club

DICE **18+**

Sheffield Social Pub Night

for adults with a disability & their friends

Come on down

Information:

Every Wednesday 6pm - 9pm
Including Bingo, Karaoke & Raffle

Venue: The Hillsborough Club
The Rear Of 25-27 Brodfield Road,
Hillsborough, Sheffield, S6 2BS

£2 Non Members | £1.00 Members | Carers Free

'MEET AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS'

Check out our websites:
www.diceenterprise.co.uk
www.hillsboroughclub.co.uk

Call Colin: 07970 413026
Email: dicesheffield@aol.co.uk

“I was approached by the founders of DICE Enterprise back in 2016 and asked if I would be interested in hosting a social night for adults with disabilities and their friends and carers. We met to see what this would require and if our venue would be appropriate for their needs. As we have full disabled access including a ramp into the main venue, disabled parking, a disabled lift providing access to our function suite and disabled toilets on both floors it was decided that the venue would be ideal. We support DICE by not charging for the room and dedicating one night per week for them to provide a chance for adults with disabilities to come and relax in a secure environment.

“Our DICE customers enjoy dancing, karaoke, socialising and a game of bingo. We have seen this grow over the 3 years and had

some really positive feedback from our customers and carers and are now looking at providing another night. We want our customers with disabilities to feel part of our venue, and we have even made an appearance on TV on the odd occasion.” – Scott Heaton, Director

Section 6: Accessible toilets

An accessible toilet is a welcome addition to any pub and will be a key factor in attracting those with accessibility requirements. Below are some top tips for pubs, from Motionspot, on how to make your toilets accessible for everyone.

1. Online guidance

- Develop an Accessibility Guide which has clear and honest advice including information on your accessible toilet

2. Staff training

- Staff should have a good understanding of who is entitled to use an accessible toilet including awareness of people who may have a hidden disability
- Staff should keep the toilet clean and easily accessible
- Staff should be aware of how to act if the red cord is pulled

3. Toilet signage

- Toilets should use recognisable words and symbols, not abstract or joke signage. Labelling sensor taps, flushes or handdryers will help those with dementia
- Ensure that there is high colour contrast between the signs, the floor and the walls to support those with visual impairments

4. Provide the right facilities

- Hooks, shelves and mirrors are useful to people with a wide range of disabilities
- Red cords should never be tied up, shortened or tucked away. Providing a push-button call alarm will reduce the risk of the red cord getting tied up

- The toilet should be clean and clear at all times and never used for storage
- Ensure the accessible toilet has level access from the entrance and bar
- Ensure the toilet is unisex so an opposite sex carer or partner can help if needed
- Consider installing a Changing Places facility if your pub has the space. These facilities cater to a wider range of disabilities
- Include single leaf toilet paper dispensers that can be used with one hand



Section 7: Physical spaces

Introduction

There are a number of simple yet effective ways which you can make your pub more accessible to everyone within the community. These changes could range from:

- Providing level access in and around the pub: pubs should provide either a built in or removable ramp making physical entry as easy as possible. The entrance should avoid being narrow and complex, and the pub itself should have enough space for wheelchair users as well as level access to the accessible toilet
- Hearing loops on the bar: providing hearing loops at the bar ensures that those with hearing needs can still enjoy their experience
- Easy to read menus: pubs should provide large print menus, using a clear, uncomplicated font, which are easy to understand. For customers with visual impairments, consider a brail alternative, or simply offer to read the menu to customers
- Make easier external access: such as having an accessible parking bay and speaking with your local Council to have the curb lowered
- Lowered bar: bars should consider having a lower section which allows wheelchair users to be served easily
- Contrasting colours and lighting: Ensure that all signage uses contrasting colours so that those with visual impairments can see them clearly. This is particularly important for emergency exit signs

Statistic: 87% of people surveyed will make a return visit when somewhere has good accessibility.⁴

Alzheimer's Society: How can I make my pub more dementia-friendly?

Talk to your colleagues about dementia and register your business so you and your staff can become Dementia Friends. Visit their website for more information.

Conduct a dementia-friendly environmental audit of your pub. Alzheimer's Society provides more information on how to do this on their website, found here.

Consider:

- Providing quieter tables
- Signage and menus which are clear, using large font
- Playing reduced volume and different genres of music at different times throughout the day or week
- Avoiding the use of dark mats and bold patterns as they can confuse people with visual perception issues

Physical spaces case studies:

Fuller's Introduces Good Food Talks

Fuller's has introduced Good Food Talks in its Managed Pubs with Fuller's Kitchens, offering a talking menu service to make it easier for visually impaired, blind or dyslexic diners to independently browse and order from the food menu. Good Food Talks provides accessible menus, both online and in its app, using text-to-speech software, large text format, background colour inversion and OpenDyslexic font.

Matt Wadsworth, the founder of Good Food Talks, said: "If you are visually impaired or blind, you are reliant for people to read the menu to you. I'm blind, so a print menu is not of a lot of use to me. My wife

and I developed Good Food Talks because she was always having to read restaurant menus to me, and we sought to improve that. You can have a browse through the menu, look at the allergy information, so whether you're visually impaired, blind or dyslexic, you can now read the restaurant menu completely independently using Good Food Talks.” Since its implementation two months ago, the Good Food Talks app has already been used by 3,500 app users across the Fuller’s pub estate.



The Cock Inn’s accessible garden facilities

The Cock Inn offers an authentic pub experience that everyone can enjoy, without compromising on quality or design. The Accessibility Guide on their website gives customers the confidence to enjoy a relaxed visit to the pub, focusing on their food, drink and company, rather than potential accessibility challenges.

Access was a key consideration when refurbishing the venue and applying for planning permission in 2015. This particular pub rests upon a hill with a multi-level patio area. In order to make the pub a

welcoming place for all customers, a paved slope allows access from the carpark onto the first patio level, and a wheelchair accessible lift was installed from there onto the top patio.

The pub also features a fully accessible toilet, a variety of tables and seating options as well as adaptable menus, lighting and noise levels to meet the needs of their customers. These facilities have allowed the pub to be more inclusive, welcoming people of all abilities.



Motionspot

Motionspot is an award-winning accessible design company and product specialist, transforming spaces so they are accessible to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Motionspot provides design advice and supplies beautiful accessible products for bathrooms, bedrooms, kitchens and communal spaces in hotels, bed and breakfasts, pubs and bars across the UK. For more information please see www.motionspot.co.uk

Case study:

The Brisley Bell, Norfolk

Brisley Bell pub in Norfolk approached Motionspot to design the accessible bedroom and bathroom as part of the pub's room refurbishment.

Motionspot carefully considered the aesthetics of the building and planned the following features:

- Circulation space around the bed
- Pocket door to the ensuite easy to access for wheelchair users
- Basin with integrated handgrips for additional support
- Wheelchair accessible toilet and easy to operate flush
- Easy to operate shower controls and dual design riser rail
- Contemporary chrome grab bars

Since opening, the Brisley Bell has already won a 'Best pub in Norfolk' award and has grown a loyal following of locals and visitors to the area. Proof of what can be achieved when beautiful accessible design is planned at an early stage as part of a refurbishment.

The White Horse, Dorking

The stunning £4 million renovation of this historic coaching inn gave owners Bespoke Hotels the perfect opportunity to prove accessible hotel bedrooms can appeal to all.

Bespoke Hotels invested in a Motionspot design that made luxury a priority and created accessible rooms full of attractive features for all guests. And bookings show the investment has paid off.

The bedrooms allow guests to feel immediately at home, whether travelling alone or with assistants or carers. Every detail has been thought through, from the thickness of the carpet that enable wheels to move freely, to widths of the doors and height of the desk.

Universal design features include:

- Zip-link beds that can be used as a double or two singles as required
- Plenty of space to move round the beds in a wheelchair
- Space to allow use of a mobile hoist
- Wardrobes with dual rails at varying heights to allow easy reach by wheelchair users.

Motionspot designed the White Horse bathrooms to ensure access needs were met without compromising on style. Accessible heritage style sanitary ware partners a contemporary and luxuriously large wet room shower area. Flexible features include:

- Bi-fold screens that can be folded back completely to increase circulation space.
- Removable shower seat and grab rails to meet guests' needs without compromising the aesthetics of the room.

Statistic: Over the past 12 months, the accessible rooms have delivered £6,900 additional revenue per room vs standard rooms.⁵

Section 8: Further information

For further information:

VisitEngland provides tools and resources to help businesses harness the valuable and growing accessible tourism market, found on [their website here](#).

For information on making accessible travel better, visit [the Tourism For All website](#).

Statistics:

- 1 Research by House of Commons (2019). People with disabilities in employment. [Found online in Parliament Research Briefings here](#).
- 2 Research from VisitEngland (2018). [The Great Britain Day Visitor 2018 Annual Report](#).
- 3 VisitEngland (2015). [National Survey on Accessibility Provision](#).
- 4 Euan's Guide (2019). [The Access Survey](#).
- 5 Statistics from Motionspot. Over a 12 month period for 1st July 2018 to 30th June 2019, the rooms had an occupancy of 74% with an ARR of £94 vs standard rooms with 42.5% occupancy and £84 ARR.

With thanks to:

Acas
Alzheimer's Society
The Black Dog
The Brisley Bell
The Cock Inn
Disability Confident
Euan's Guide
The Fox and Hounds
Fuller, Smith and Turner
Guide Dogs
The Hillsborough Club
The Horse and Jockey
Meet 'N' Match
MotionSpot
Narcolepsy UK
RNIB
The Royal Exchange Pub and Dining
St Austell Brewery
Thwaites
Tourism For All
VisitEngland
Wadworth Brewery
The White Horse

British Beer & Pub Association

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www.beerandpub.com
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