





Saturday 7th December 2 - 6pm

Try out an e-bike

Support for the community, and news from local groups





RHS Britain in Bloom 2024

WINNER

BEST SMALL TOWN VIN THE UK **STONEHOUSE**





welcome

Welcome to the final edition of Stonehouse News in 2024. The nights are drawing in, it's growing colder, and the town is gearing up for Goodwill Fest on 7th December. We hope you can come along to enjoy the fun!

Since our last newsletter, Stonehouse has three new Town Councillors: Keren Capeling, Stephen Hunter, and Keith Creighton. We wish them all a warm welcome to the Council.

Stonehouse in Bloom recently celebrated a resounding success



Britain in Bloom

Success for Stonehouse in Bloom in this year's **RHS Britain in Bloom** competition

Stonehouse in Bloom fought off some very tough and worthy competition to scoop a Gold Award and Best Small Town in the UK Award. 52 finalists from across the UK competed in 11 categories from Small Village to City and Coastal to Urban Community. Some of the SIB team headed up to the awards ceremony in Manchester to receive both awards from horticulturist, author, and television presenter Frances Tophill.

Each of the 17 Bloom Regions and Nations, which run Bloom competitions, nominate the highest-performing entries to compete in the UK Finals. The group's efforts were judged according to criteria that scores their commitment to improving the local environment, community engagement and horticultural excellence.

Chair of Stonehouse in Bloom, Pam Swain said the group were extremely proud, emotional and grateful:

We are absolutely thrilled with this result not only for the Stonehouse in Bloom team, but for all the other groups in the community who have worked with us. We started with just a small group and now we work with the Town Council, Cotswold Canals Trust, GCRP, Hopelands and Park Federation Schools, Moreton Hill Care Centre, Stonehouse Court Hotel, GWR, Network Rail, Aboricultural Association to name a few, High Street businesses, and many more organisations. There is a real sense of pride in our town and huge support across the local community and wider Stroud District.

This year's national awards have cemented years of hard work and commitment by the community in Stonehouse, as noted by the RHS Britain in Bloom judges:

"The entire community of Stonehouse has come together to foster a sense of professionalism and pride."

Stonehouse in Bloom have many future plans, including seeking a larger piece of land to create a bigger Community Garden where they will have room to welcome a greater number of community volunteers, after making contact with a Social Prescribing Lead in

This is following the success of their Community Garden at the station used by Building Circles, a small Gloucestershire Charity that enables adults with learning disabilities to live more active lives, with greater choice and opportunity.

The group also want to continue and build upon existing partnerships, and focusing on the canal regeneration. They hope to further protect and enhance wildlife, promote the canal's wellbeing and health benefits as well as promote Stonehouse as a tourism destination, all whilst helping to secure it's future prosperity for all. This has been greatly helped by the canalside Ship Inn site recently being Licensed to the Town Council for Ship Inn Community Enterprise (SpICE) to create a Community Canal Hub on the site.

If you'd like to be involved in Stonehouse in Bloom's Britain in Bloom campaign for 2024-2025, please get in touch with Deborah Curtis at deborah.curtis647580@gmail.com or message the group via their Facebook page @StonehouseInBloom.

Mayor's Column

Huge congratulations to Stonehouse in Bloom for winning a Gold Award and Best Small Town in the UK award, at the National Britain in Bloom Finals 2024!

I've been very pleased to see the continuing success of the small but thriving Saturday Market in the town. This is a Town Council initiative which has cost nothing to achieve. It follows previous extremely costly and unworkable attempts by others to make this happen. I hope this success can continue but it needs your support to do so. Please support your local traders as much as possible.

With the Christmas season fast approaching, work is well underway by Councillors, staff and volunteers to make Goodwill on the 7th of December another great success and notable day in the town's year. Please put this date in your diary.

On another Christmas theme, the Town Council will again be teamingup with Stonehouse Rotary Club to bring you two nights of the famous Carol Float touring the town. We will be collecting cash for our local charities. Please keep an eye on Facebook for dates and times.

Perhaps a little less known about but equally important, is the essential capital project the Town Council is undertaking to bring mains drainage services to Oldends Pavilion. The first spadeful of earth will soon be turned and will transform facilities from an outdated septic tank to modern mains services. This is a technically difficult project due to the physical challenges of the site, but Stonehouse Town Football Club will also benefit from this investment by having access to the system. Other environmental improvements are also planned for Oldends Lane, so watch this space.

There is much more going-on in the town that I don't have room to tell you about here so please keep an eye on the Town Council website and Facebook pages as well as the Town Council meeting minutes which are published for your information.

May I wish you all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Cllr Neil Gibbs

Mayor and Chair of Stonehouse Town Council

Community Arboretum news

Over the next few weeks, you may notice labels appearing on some of the trees around town. These are the same as those you would find in a botanical garden or an arboretum, and they provide some key information about the trees. An example tag (balanced on the tree for display reasons only!) is included in the photo and shows the family (in this case, Fagaceae), common name, botanical name and date of planting. Some will also include the natural geographic range of the species in the bottom right-hand corner.

These tags were kindly produced for Stonehouse by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and donated to the town as a contribution to the arboretum project. Thirty labels have been made so far, and we hope to introduce more in the coming years.

For more information about the Stonehouse Community Arboretum, please contact john@trees.org.uk



Supporting the community

Citizens Advice

If you find yourself struggling financially during or after the holidays, don't panic. Support is out there, and Citizens Advice can help you understand what's available. We're here to help you find a way forward.

Please look at the public website first if possible (www.citizensadvice.org.uk). If that isn't possible or you need further help please call us on 0808 800 0510 or 0808 800 0511 (Monday and Tuesday 10am to 4pm; Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 12.30pm). You can also access our local website (www. citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk) to complete our email form.

We will be closed from 1pm on 24th December until 10am on Thursday 2nd January but we will have information about how to get urgent help on our local website.

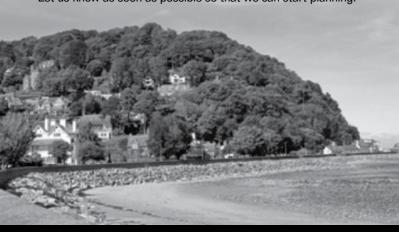


Supporting our Community

The team at All Pulling Together will be holding a stall at the town Goodwill Fest again this year. Saturday 7th December will see us join with all the other organisations in the area to provide a brilliant afternoon and evening in the High Street. We will be providing a raffle, books, toys and Christmas gifts for all ages. Come and join the fun.

Our annual coach trip this year was to Minehead. It was the first time we have taken a trip to the town, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all those that attended. If you have ideas of where you would like us to visit next year, get in touch, by phoning 01453 822705 or email us at aptcentral@btconnect.com. We need fresh ideas ready

We are about to start some new free sessions. What would you like to see us provide? Would it be cookery; craft; a plant or seed swap? Let us know as soon as possible so that we can start planning.



Stonehouse Saturday stalls

Stonehouse Town Council has been working hard to bring the town a more reliable market, which over the last few months we hope you have noticed.

We have three stalls that are here every Saturday come rain or shine - Pete the veg, Paganhill Plants, and The Stonehouse

Attending fortnightly - our favourite SJ Cakes, Butterfly Sky's, Ken with his birdboxes, and The Loaded Croissant Co.

We are pleased to also have Carl's Deli, and Picture it by Donna attending monthly. Mummas Meals along with Normalicious had their debut on 12/10/24 and are looking to attend more regularly.

Our aim is to provide products not found in any of the High Street shops and to increase footfall in town.

Please come along and support us - we are open Saturdays from 10am - 2pm, outside the Willow Tree Practice, in the High Street. December 21st will be the last before Christmas, and we will be back in February 2025.





Stonehouse's youth club continues to thrive

Stonehouse's own Youth Club, The Pod, is continuing to thrive. We have as much to celebrate as we have to look forward to, so please continue to support our cause and point young people in our direction if you think they may benefit from being a part of our safe space.

Our young people were recently treated to some fantastic opportunities this October half term break. Thanks to funding from Stonehouse Town Council, we took a group of young people to Drayton Manor for an extremely affordable price. On Halloween day we celebrated with a double session giving young people productive and fun activities to do which were led by our brilliant

We have continued to provide freshly cooked food for our young people every Friday, providing nutrition and also an opportunity to learn cooking basics.

Coming up, we have just launched our Youth Voice programme, giving young people an opportunity to look at The Door's working policies and have their input on them, we are so excited for the fruits of this programme to be realised.



Inside The Pod we are midway through a revamp, which is being carried out by our young people, when it is finished The Pod will look phenomenal! We would love everyone to keep their eyes peeled for social enterprises being run by young people to open soon, we are full of anticipation for this.

Finally, we are looking forward to celebrating the achievements of our young people at our Annual Awards Night which you are all warmly invited to join us on Tuesday 3rd December from 6.30pm at the Stroud Sub Booms

TREASURER NEEDED for Stonehouse Community -**Partnership**

Stonehouse Community Partnership provides an important service to Stonehouse by bringing together and providing banking facilities for local community groups such as the Stonehouse Walking Festival and for events such as the Canal Lock Challenge.

We are looking for someone to take over the role of treasurer.

If you think you might be able to help, please contact the Town Council or get in touch with Carol on councillorkambites@stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk or phone 07816 552171.





Home-Start Stroud and Gloucester are a local charity supporting families within the community experiencing a time in their lives when they need a little extra help and support, practically and emotionally. Parenting is not always easy, but with the support from others, together we can really make a difference. Our volunteer training provides people with the skills and confidence to share their parenting knowledge to help make that difference when it's needed the most.

If you are thinking about volunteering and have as little as 2-3 hours a week spare, please visit our website for more information and to apply www.homestartsd.org or call 01453 297470 for a chat.

Community news & groups







STONEHOUSE W.I.

Winter is a good time to reflect on our activities & achievements so far; 2024 holds some memorable moments for us. A trip to Dursley to watch DODS perform Calendar Girls; our summer outing to Stanway House; the visual support around our beautiful

planter on the High Street for International Women's Day, World Oceans Day and Sunflowers Suicide Support feature among them.

However, we're never ones to sit on our hands! Our 2025 programme is ready, and we're looking forward to getting involved with the activities planned. Learning and laughter is essential to us and we'll be doing lots of both in the coming months! Speakers giving insights into a Royal photographer's work and Stonehouse in Bloom kick off Stonehouse WIs New Year, so what's not to love?!

We have a few spaces for new members, if interested please get

There's more to discover about Stonehouse WI and the things we do - just visit our website: http://stonehousewi.weebly.com



Hello again from **Share and Repair**

As we head into the months of winter we are busy catching up on outstanding repair jobs.

Summer takes a toll on volunteers able to work due to holidays and some absence due to sickness. So it's all go now. Having enough volunteers, both for reception and repairs is vital to maintain the exemplary service we aim to offer. With that in mind maybe you might consider giving us a hand in the New Year?

Start 2025 with a new, exciting and worthwhile venture. Come and join us. The team would love to welcome you whatever you have to offer. For a chat to find out more talk to Ken or Meryl on 01453 827860 during opening hours 10am - 1.00pm

With Christmas in mind look out for our 'Bargain Table'! Really useful items offered at giveaway prices!

We all look forward to seeing you soon.



On your e-bike!

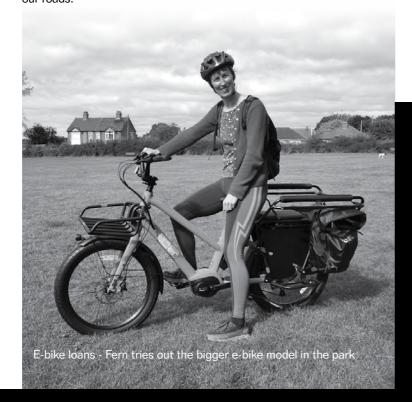
New scheme makes it easy for people to try out electric bicycles

Local volunteers have been lending e-bikes out from Bridge Cafe on Stonehouse's High St since August, helping local people from across Stonehouse, Great Oldbury and The Stanleys see if e-bikes work for them. The project has 2 bikes - a 'go anywhere' smaller bike that can carry 1 child on the back, and a bigger cargo-style bike with room for 2 kids. Both come with everything you need to get pedalling, from safety equipment to panniers and carry racks. And best of all, because they are power assisted, you don't need to be super fit to give one a go.

As we go into the winter months, the project will be loaning the e-bikes out for up to a month at a time, making trying one out for your commute or school run even easier. Get in touch with our new E-bike Coordinator John on hello@pedal-power.bike if you're interested in giving one a go - or find out more on www.pedal-power.bike.

People who have loaned a bike through the project have really enjoyed it "A great service! Loved having the loan E-Bike as a way to get around, from dropping the little one off at playgroup, to picking them up from grandparents, cycling to parks, commuting to work and not forgetting the little trips to the shops."

The project has been set up by Transition Stroud and The Bike Drop to help people find out whether e-bikes work for them, support people to have a more active lifestyle, and reduce pollution on our roads.





Longfield Christmas Tree Recycling is back!

From Saturday 11th – Tuesday 14th January Longfield staff and volunteers will be collecting YOUR Christmas tree in return for a voluntary donation. No mess in your car, queueing at the tip, or hassle for you to worry about! Plus we chip all the trees collected and use them for pathways or turn them into bio-fuel so it's the eco-friendly way to get rid of your tree too! Our collection is run by volunteers and local companies donating the use of vans so your donations can be used to provide free care and support to those living locally with a life-limiting condition.

To book your collection and help your local hospice visit www.just-helping.org.uk/register



Stonehouse Community Centre update



The Community Café is open on Thursdays and Fridays 0900 - 1130.

Community lunches resume on 8 January 2025 with 2 courses plus tea and coffee for just £7.50.

Events

Watch out for Stonehouse Community Association fundraising events in the

Rooms for hire

Day time room hire available (mornings and afternoons – 4 hour sessions) suitable for childrens, art, exercise and other groups.

Volunteers wanted

Volunteers are always welcome for the Café – come when you can. No long-term commitment.

Telephone Sarah for details: 01453 823241 Email: stonehouse1@tiscali.co.uk Webpage: stonehousecommunitycentre.co.uk Find us on Facebook and Instagram

The Fig Tree

The Fig Tree continues to flourish offering activities for Stonehouse's community. Pop in and check out what happens each day or look at the posters in the window.

The Fig Tree provides free activities and is funded by donations and sales from our card shop-so do spread the word!

Whether you want to learn to cook a new recipe, be creative, polish up your English or bring your babies and toddlers to come and play or maybe join the share café, a safe space to come and talk about loss, there is a group for you at The Fig Tree.

Come and say hello, you will always receive a warm welcome from Catherine, Su and the volunteers.





Special needs provision at the Stonehouse Park **Federation**

The Stonehouse Park Federation brings together two inclusive schools which care passionately about children whatever their needs. Like all schools, we are responding to the countrywide massive increase in need for Special Education.

The Federation benefits from a highly experienced non-teaching SENCO who is part of the executive leadership team and who works from Nursery to Year 6. This enables her to get to know children before they have even started Reception and then, later on, to support their transition to Secondary School. We also employ our own Speech and Language Therapist who works two days a week promoting children's ability to express themselves fluently.

In school, our inclusive classrooms use technology and practical resources in a carefully planned way to enable children with barriers to access the same learning as their peers.

Last year, Gloucestershire approved 900 of the 1500 requests it received for Education and Health Care Plans. We are proud that every one of those requests submitted by our school was accepted because all were carefully and thoroughly prepared and showed long-term evidence of need.

As ever, the Federation's major challenge is funding - a national

Hilary Heggie, School governor





Ship Inn site project begins

Thank you to all supporters & friends

Work has now started to clear the Ship Inn site and during a working party on October 26th, over 30 Ship Inn Community Enterprise (SpICE) members and volunteers joined forces to rake up a mountain of brambles as the first step towards opening the space to the public.

SpICE now has access to the site following the successful translocation by ecologists of a small number of reptiles - including slow worms and a grass snake.

The aim is to create a wildlife and eco-friendly community hub which can be enjoyed by all. The results from the most recent SpICE survey have confirmed that a cafe and toilets are still top priority with the community.

Thank you to Cotswold Canals Connected who kindly cut the bulk of brambles with a tractor and flail, and to Stonehouse Town Council's groundsmen Rod Helps & Paul Crosby, who spent a couple of days strimming the site in preparation for clearance.



Removing the debris was a great workout for the volunteers at the community working party, whose efforts were fuelled by hot drinks and a barbeque. It was a very successful day in glorious autumn sunshine and more community events are already planned.

The SpICE group is supported by Stonehouse Town Council which has so far donated CCTV equipment and has also ensured that all the necessary ecological surveys have been carried out prior to accessing the site.

SpICE is now building a volunteer site maintenance team and free training will be offered to use appropriate equipment on site.

If you would like to be involved please email hello@ spicestonehouse.co.uk or pop into the town council office.

To become a member of SpICE or for progress updates visit the website: https://spicestonehouse.co.uk or visit the Facebook page:



The Barchester **Charitable Foundation**

Did you know that Barchester, the company that owns Moreton Hill Care Home has a Charitable Foundation that helps older people and other adults with a disability or mental health problems? Grants are given to help people connect or re-connect with others in their local community, the focus and aim being to combat loneliness and enable people to be active.

To find out more please visit our website on www.bhcfoundation.org.uk or call in to see us at Moreton Hill at the top of Horsemarling Lane GL10 3BZ.



Stonehouse History Group

The Milestone Society held their AGM at the Community Centre in October, where Vicki Walker and Jim Dickson gave presentations on the history of our town and how we restored the two milestones: one on Bristol Road and the other on High Street.

Meetings are normally held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Park Junior School Hall at 7.30 pm. Cost £2 for members, £3 for non-members

Forthcoming Events

December 11th - Nick Brunger - Strange tales.

January 8th - Stonehouse in Bloom

February 12th - Vicki Walker and Shirley Dicker -Stonehouse in WW2.

March 12th - Ian Boskett - The Great Train Robbery 1963.

April 9th - Nick Sharpe - Hillforts -A legacy of the Iron Age Dobunni tribe.

May 14th AGM - Members' short talks.

Find out more on our website www.stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk

Or contact info@stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk



WW2 Air Raid Warden's badge



High Street milestone



Women on the war work at Bridgend Hostel 1940s





Teckels is very excited for our **first ever charity shop** to be opening at 17, Russell St, Stroud! This will be a crucial lifeline to our rescue work for animals in need, so please do come along to our shop's grand opening from 11am on Friday 22nd November!

Our festive edition of our popular monthly pub quiz is also coming up at Fromebridge Mill in Whitminster on Wednesday 4th December. Winners get Prosecco and 2 free carveries, so come along for a fab night of food, drink and friendly competition! Quiz starts at 7:30pm, teams of up to 6 people, £3 per person, all proceeds go to our rescue!

And our lovely Christmas shoebox appeal is also back for 2024! If you'd like to make a rescue dog or cat's Christmas and fill a shoebox with goodies, head to our website or Facebook page to see how to take part!



Recreation



Stonehouse Town Football

The season is well under way with a packed fixtures list for our adults and youth alike. See dates for your diary.

The Nest now has its very own Facebook page, please give it a follow. We offer hire at very reasonable rates to meet your requirements, whether it be for a birthday, anniversary, wake or meeting. Any enquiries can be sent to info@ stonehousetownfc.co.uk.

We have recently set up a new youth 'Minis' team, aimed at 5-7 year olds, training is on a Sunday 10-11 for further information please contact youthsecretary@stonehousetownfc.co.uk

Dates for your diary

7/12/24 - Firsts V Southam

14/12/24 – Firsts V Shortwood (Local Derby, always a great watch)

17/12/24 - Firsts V Tytherington

28/12/24 - Reserves V Frampton (Free Entry for all Reserve

The Nest and cabin are open for food and drink on match days, please do pop along and show support for your local team.

Chess & Backgammon

Lighten up the dark days playing Chess & Backgammon on Thursdays in The Woolpack, from 6.30pm. Sunday afternoon sessions, and other tactical boardgames could be possible if there is enough interest. Sessions are fun, informal and free, for all ages - from 9 to 81 years old so far, and levels of play, including beginners.

If interested contact Liz Green: lizgreen1119@gmail.com

Stonehouse Walking Festival

Following on from a very successful and enjoyable festival this year, save the dates 5-14th September for 2025! Again we will aim to celebrate the range of walks on offer in the Stonehouse area and beyond with free, guided walks.

We will be inviting all our volunteers for a special walk & tea party event in March. If you'd like to get more involved with organising the next festival, or perhaps vou could lead a walk, or be a back marker, let us know by emailing: stonehousewalkfest@gmail.com.

Website: http://www.stonehousewalks.co.uk Facebook: Stonehousewalkingfestival



Council corner



Stonehouse Christmas

Saturday 7th December 2pm - 6pm 2024

Stalls, food, donkeys, live music, street entertainers and Father Christmas on the High Street



Groundsmen's updates

When the weather allows, our Town Maintenance officers, Rod and Paul, can still be seen out and about tending to and mowing the town's green spaces - as here in Old Chapel Garden. Their contribution to Stonehouse in Bloom's stunning win as Best Small Town in the national Britain in Bloom competition – along with a gold medal! - was vital and widely appreciated.

You will also see them around the town repairing or replacing any worn and broken play equipment. Amongst recent jobs, they have fitted new seesaw and cradle swing seats at Meadow Road

If you notice any broken or vandalised sport and leisure equipment in the town's parks, be sure to report it to either Rod, Paul or the



Look out for our next edition, due February 2025

Stonehouse Junior Parkrun

We at Stonehouse junior parkrun have just had our 250th event, which is a big milestone in parkrun terms. We are very happy to have been able to host so many events for everyone. Our next big event should be our festive themed one around Christmas and the New Year so check our website or Facebook pages for all the updates.

We have also had some great Duke of Edinburgh volunteers joining

us to earn towards their awards and we really enjoy the fact that we can help each other. If you know anyone looking for such an opportunity, we'd be happy to see them.

We are here every Sunday to offer 4-14 year-olds a free 2km event where they can run, skip, hop, jog, walk, etc and anyone can volunteer too. Join us at 8:50am for a 9am start and a warm welcome.



stonehouse town council information

Contact us

Stonehouse Town Council

Town Hall

1 Oueens Road

Stonehouse

GL10 2QA

T: 01453 822070

Town Clerk: Carlos Novoth

E: townclerk@stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

Deputy Clerk: Jacqui Sanders

E: deputyclerk@stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

Business Support & Communication: Carla Swindells/David Marsden

E: contactus@stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

Visit stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk Facebook - Stonehouse Town Council

Opening hours

We are fully open to the public now between 9:30am - 3:30pm on every weekday.

Check our website for up-to-date information.

Forthcoming meetings

FULL TOWN COUNCIL

9th December 2024 20th January 2025 17th February 2025

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

25th November 2024 13th January 2025 3rd February 2025

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

2nd December 2024 6th January 2025 27th January 2025

Full Town Council meetings now take place at the Town Hall/Library. Moveable bookshelves allow for meetings to be held in the Library.

Agendas and Minutes are published on the Council's website stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

Your Councillors

Theresa Watt (Vice Chair)

Stonehouse Ward

Town Councillors - stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

Ctononicaco Hara	
John Callinan	01453 825547
Keren Capeling	07834 855559
Keith Creighton	07773 025383
Deborah Curtis	07988 630951
Marcus Dixon	07813 807488
Neil Gibbs (Chair)	01453 828430
Stephen Hunter	01453 826783
Carol Kambites	07816 552171
Simon Macgregor	07813 541742
Madelaine Maraboli-Roman	01453 822070
Gary Powell	01453 826527
Val Randell	07964 852707
Keith Terry	07743 470094

Town Councillors can be contacted via email using Councillor then their surname eg. councillorpowell@stonehousetowncouncil.gov.uk

01453 821428

District Councillors - stroud.gov.uk

Carol Kambites 07816 552171
cllr.carol.kambites@stroud.gov.uk
John Callinan 01453 825547
cllr.john.callinan@stroud.gov.uk
John Parker
cllr.john.parker@stroud.gov.uk

County Councillor - gloucestershire.gov.uk

Nick Housden 07754 466939 nicholas.housden@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Member of Parliament - parliament.uk

Simon Opher

simon.opher.mp@parliament.uk 01453 621304

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