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Judges'
Report
2013

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Introduction

Now in its 11th year, Homes for Scotland's Annual Awards scheme was introduced in order to demonstrate the industry's commitment to raise standards as well as recognise and promote best practice throughout the sector.

This is reflected in the themes for this year's Awards which focused on the "4 P's" of **people, process, product and partnership**.

These encompassed a range of important policy issues affecting the industry's ability to deliver much needed new housing as well as its future success.

All submissions within these categories were open to home builder, Registered Social Landlord and associate members as follows:

People:	Best Employer Young Achiever (under 35) Outstanding Achievement	Process:	Best Marketing Campaign Best Green Initiative
Product:	Best Home Design Best Development – large (30+ units) Best Development – small (up to 29 units)	Partnership:	Best Partnership in Planning Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery Best Supporting Company

In addition to the above, the headline Home Builder of the Year award was continued. For this award, all entries received across the four themed categories were considered, with three shortlisted companies going forward to compete for this accolade.

The overall winner was then decided by electronic audience vote at the Homes for Scotland Annual Lunch & Awards ceremony on Friday 17th May.

The Judging Panel

The independent judging panel comprised a cross-section of individuals with a keen interest in Scotland's home building industry.



Bill Jamieson

Chaired by Bill Jamieson, Commentator and former Scotsman Executive Editor, the panel also included:

Dr Debbie Mayes - Director of Projects, The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland

Dr Mohammed Imbabi - Senior Lecturer, University of Aberdeen

Iain Malloch - Chair, Council of Mortgage Lenders Scotland

Malcolm Cannon - Chair, Solicitors Property Centres Scotland & Chair, Asset Skills Scotland

Jim Hayton - Policy Manager, Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers

Fraser Carlin - Chair, Heads of Planning Scotland



Dr Debbie Mayes



Dr Mohammed Imbabi



Iain Malloch



Malcolm Cannon



Jim Hayton



Fraser Carlin

The Judging Process

The first meeting of the judging panel took place on Wednesday 12th December 2012, and the Homes for Scotland Awards 2013 officially launched on Monday 17th December 2012. The closing date for all entries was Monday 18th February 2013.

A record number of 87 entries were received in total, with each judge assessing entries across several categories.

The judging process was by single stage assessment based on the quality and content of submissions received. It was further supported by the use of scoring matrices to increase consistency in assessment.

The judges completed the shortlisting process on Monday 12th March, with awards and commendations agreed on Monday 25th March. Details were announced at the Homes for Scotland Annual Lunch & Awards ceremony on Friday 17th May.



Judges' Observations

Overall, the judges considered the majority of submissions received for this year's awards scheme to be of a high standard.

They were particularly encouraged to note the record volume of entries given the challenges which the industry continues to face.

However, whilst the panel felt that a number of entries stood out in terms of presentation, they also felt that some lacked this key aspect. Judges expressed concern that some entrants had not satisfactorily addressed the criteria as set out in the official entry brochure, whilst others in the Best Development category had failed to heed the specific request to include a design statement as well as location plan and site layout plan. The addition of house price information was also considered necessary.



Chair's Foreword

During the course of this year's judging process I was caught up in completing a new house development of my own, dealing with final modifications and additions, snagging issues and certification procedures and, not least, undertaking that critical obligation - making sure the builders were paid!

Because of this experience I can personally vouch for a salient point which figured in almost all of the submissions received: the significant and continuous advancement in building technology, use of materials, design and especially in energy conservation and efficiency. Housing standards have improved immeasurably in the last decade.

My one regret is that this personal housing project was almost complete by the time the Homes for Scotland awards submissions came in. For across the categories there were outstanding examples of home design, use of space, choice of materials and indoor and external presentation of which I was truly envious and would have been delighted to copy.

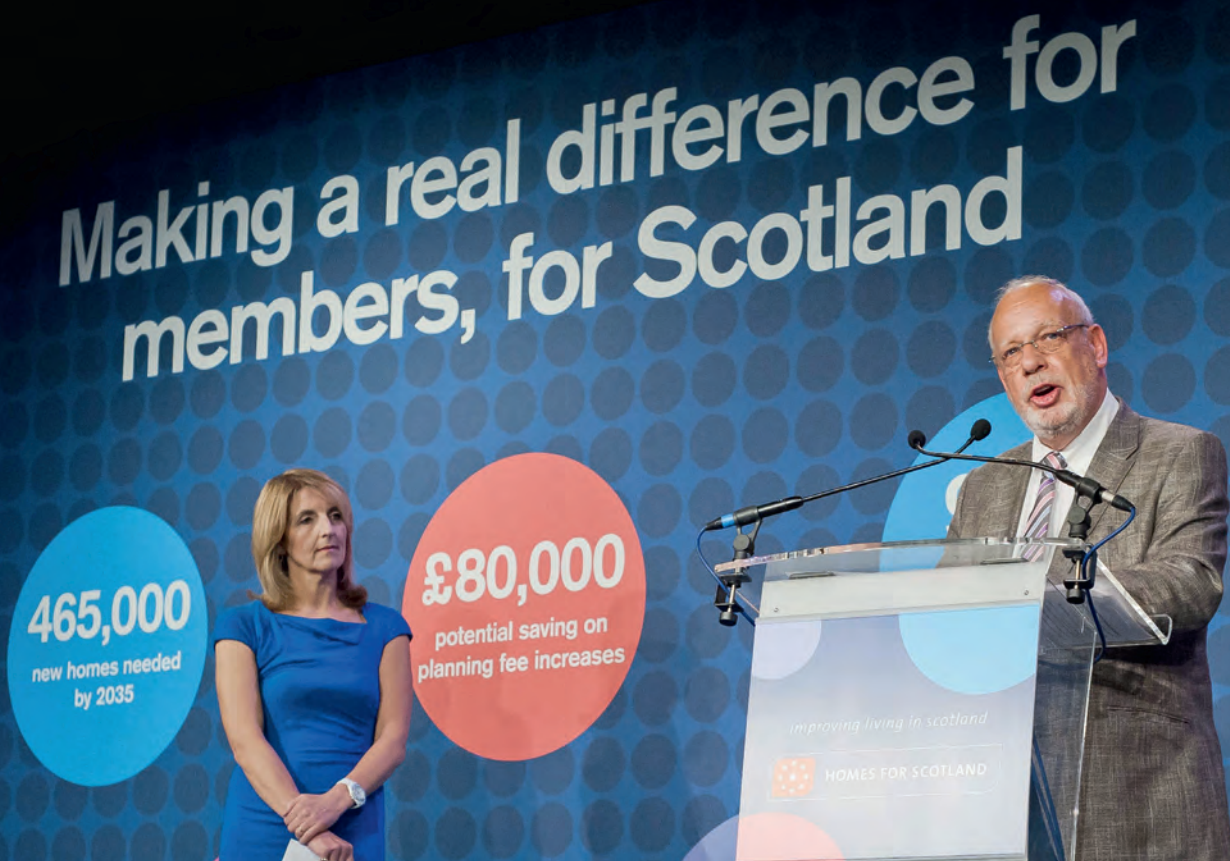
As for my fellow judges, they rose admirably to the task. For this year the awards attracted no less than 87 submissions - the highest total since the competition began in 2003 and a near 10 per cent increase on the previous year, itself a record.

The industry's ability to put together 87 submissions is a remarkable achievement in itself given the continuing huge difficulties it faces. But what drives this industry forward - and what has historically always driven it forward - is its ability to create, innovate, adapt and inspire, to lift our aspirations for better designed, more attractive, more energy efficient, environmentally pleasing, lifestyle suited and desirable places in which to live.

Included in the remit of Homes for Scotland is a commitment to improving the quality of living in Scotland by providing this and future generations with much needed new, warm sustainable homes in places people want to live.

These awards well demonstrate this commitment. For their purpose is to give due recognition to excellence in Scottish home building and to encourage a continuous and relentless raising of standards. In this, all of this year's entrants can take pride in the quality of their work, and the contribution they have made to this greater end.

Bill Jamieson
Commentator and former Scotsman Executive Editor



Shortlist

The following list of shortlisted companies was announced on 3rd April, with the winners of the Outstanding Achievement and Home Builder of the Year awards announced at the ceremony on Friday 17th May:

Best Employer

- Miller Homes
- Barratt Developments – ASPIRE Graduate Programme
- Mactaggart & Mickel Group

Young Achiever (under 35)

- Martin Plane (Miller Homes)
- Erin McGuire (Barratt Homes Scotland)
- Frazer MacKay (Peverel Scotland)
- Ashley Cassels (Stewart Milne Homes)
- Maureen Douglas (Forster Roofing)

Best Marketing Campaign

- Springfield Properties
- Cruden Homes West
- CALA Homes

Best Green Initiative

- Springfield Properties
- Mactaggart & Mickel Group with CCG & Cruden Homes
- Housing Innovation Showcase (Kingdom Housing Association)
- Forster Energy Solutions
- Miller Homes

Best Home Design

- Cruden Homes West (Park View, Govan)
- Gladedale Capital (Quartermile, Edinburgh)
- Veitchi Homes (Rothney Gardens, Inch)

Best Development – large (30+ units)

- CALA Homes (Trinity Park, Edinburgh)
- Cruden Homes West (Park View, Govan)
- Gladedale Capital (Quartermile, Edinburgh)
- Muir Homes (Silverdykes, Anstruther)
- Barratt Homes Scotland (Plot Q, Western Harbour, Edinburgh)

Best Development – small (up to 29 units)

- Headon Developments (The Green, Strathkinness)
- Springfield Properties (Duncanshill, Elgin)
- Bancon Homes (Knightsbridge, Inverurie)
- Miller Homes (Graysmill Dell, Edinburgh)
- Glasgow Housing Association & City Building (Woodside Terrace, Glasgow)

Best Partnership in Planning

- Miller Homes with Perth & Kinross Council
- Places for People with East Dunbartonshire Council

Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery

- Dunedin Canmore Housing with City of Edinburgh Council, Hart Builders & Lovell Partnerships
- Cruden Homes East with Places for People
- Cruden Homes West with Cruden Buildings and Renewals, Elderpark Housing Association, Govan Housing Association & Scottish Government
- Housing Innovation Showcase (Kingdom Housing Association)
- Rettie & Co with Cruden Homes, Hart Builders, Hillcrest Housing Association, Teague Homes & City of Edinburgh Council
- West Lothian Council with Lovell Partnerships

Best Supporting Company

- EMA Architecture + Design
- Gillespie Macandrew
- PPS Scotland
- First Mortgage

Awards and Commendations





Best Employer

The introduction of this new award sought to acknowledge stand-out organisations able to provide a clear evidence base demonstrating the successful management of their employees and human assets.

Areas considered by the judges included motivation, retention, development and organisational transformation.

Winner: Mactaggart & Mickel Group

A clear winner, the judges were particularly, and unanimously impressed with Mactaggart & Mickel's investment in people. This included a commitment to personal development through a high number of training days, impressive use of staff forums and consequently improved employee/employer relations.

Further examples of innovation and competitive edge included a wind-down period for retiring employees, the use of staff surveys with thorough follow-up and the enhanced Corporate Social Responsibility achieved through, amongst other initiatives, the cycle to work scheme.

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Young Achiever

This category aims to celebrate those shining stars in management, professional and technical-based roles who are already demonstrating the potential to make a huge contribution to the industry's future success.

The judges were looking for a clear understanding of why such an award would be merited in terms of skills set, attitude and/or approach.

Winner: Maureen Douglas (Forster Roofing)

The judges were hugely impressed by the range and breadth of Maureen's achievements to date, which stretch beyond her 'day job' as HR Manager.

Among her many successes, Maureen has transformed health and safety practice within Forster Roofing, initiated and implemented quality assurance schemes and contributed at national level within her sector to promote the skills and training agenda through her contribution to industry-wide training and accreditation schemes.

Recently, she has been responsible for developing the Forster Modern Apprenticeship scheme which will have potential strategic impact on the roofing industry as a whole.

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Outstanding Achievement

Recognising the exceptional efforts of individuals who have made a special contribution to championing the aims of the home building industry in Scotland, the decision on this year's recipient was taken by the Homes for Scotland Executive Committee, comprising some 10 representatives from the Homes for Scotland Board.

Winner: **Ronnie Jacobs**

Ronnie Jacobs stood out in this category for a new build career spanning more than 30 years which includes positions at the highest levels with some of the UK's largest builders.

He has also been involved with a number of key organisations and committees, representing the industry's views with the CBI and NHBC as well as the Scottish Government's Housing Supply Task Force.

Ronnie is also a past Chair of Homes for Scotland, having undertaken this role just a week after the Scottish political landscape changed following the 2007 election.

Having retired in 2010, he still remains closely involved in the housing sector, now as a Board member of the Wheatley Group and also working with Home Log Book.

Having enjoyed a very distinguished career, Ronnie has played a pivotal role in helping to further the interests of the home building industry over more than three decades.

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Best Marketing Campaign

Submissions for this award, which were welcome for all campaigns relating to the home building sector, regardless of target audience, required to demonstrate creativity and customer awareness as well as quantifiable results in terms of business benefits.

Judges were also interested to note evidence of best use of insight and thinking as well as media mix.

Winner: CALA Homes

The winner without doubt in the judges' view, CALA's "The Time is Now" campaign stood out by embracing multiple media channels, whilst shifting to a more 'digital world' on the back of the organisation's own review of media effectiveness.

Whilst TV was used, it was backed by a video on demand service, prompted on YouTube and linked via Facebook and Twitter platforms.

The impact of the campaign is highlighted by some impressive statistics: in Scotland, where the main weight was focused, enquiries to developments in January increased by 77%, with net sales increasing by 73% on the previous January. Substantial results given this was achieved on a reduced spend versus the same period in 2012.

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Commendation: Cruden Homes West

The judges were impressed with the way in which Cruden Homes West built upon previous campaigns to concentrate on the key issues currently facing First Time Buyers; an approach which struck a chord with prospective customers as demonstrated by a significant uptick in sales.

The Park View First Time Buyer campaign's use of targeted marketing using local press and radio, including editorial supplements in conjunction with local housing associations and Credit Unions was of particular note.

Using real First Time Buyers meant that people were positioned firmly at the heart of the campaign, highlighting that purchasing a new home can be both achievable and affordable.

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Best Green Initiative

This award asked entrants to demonstrate excellence in the way they approached the low carbon, sustainability and environmental agendas.

This could have encompassed building techniques, materials or the use of new technologies as well as new products or process improvements.

The judges were especially interested in examples meeting or going beyond policy requirements, to move these core agendas forward.

Winner: Mactaggart & Mickel Group with CCG & Cruden Homes

Adopting a joined-up, fabric-first approach meant that the Athletes' Village in the East End of Glasgow (City Legacy project) stood out as a worthy winner in the judges' view.

Transforming into a lively residential community with 700 homes, amenities and public spaces after the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, the Village will have a host of innovative features, including combined heat and power systems, which will result in bills around 40% lower than other power methods for future residents.

The Village also demonstrates a commitment to waste and water minimisation with impressive porous surfacing allowing water to soak through to the natural water table.

It was clear to the judging panel that delivering an exemplar project was the intention from the outset and this has resulted in a scheme that could and should be replicated in locations across Scotland.

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Commendation: Springfield Properties

Springfield Properties was commended for its collaborative approach to developing a 2016 compliant, commercially viable home building system.

The judges applauded the ambition which was demonstrated within this submission, with the overall commitment to delivering Gold standard homes well ahead of regulation clearly set out at all stages of the process.

In this entry, Springfield Properties has demonstrated a highly efficient manufacturing process and use of materials, with scope for the system to be rolled out commercially, producing economies of scale which will reduce costs further.

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Commendation: Housing Innovation Showcase (Kingdom Housing Association)

The project in Dunfermline was highlighted as a keen contender for recognition across a number of categories in this year's awards scheme, while the judges felt that the focus on new and sustainable technologies which reduce costs while improving quality meant that a commendation under Best Green Initiative was most fitting.

Working in partnership to develop 27 new homes using 10 different Modern Methods of Construction, this uniquely innovative project showcases an industry-led approach to the delivery of affordable homes.

The judges were particularly impressed to note the low average anticipated energy costs, at just £300 per year.

With lessons that are likely to benefit the entire industry, the efforts by Kingdom are to be applauded.

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Best Home Design

Considering function, form and economic viability, the judges sought out entries worthy of such accolade, regardless of market price point.

The judges looked to recognise the differences between large and small houses or apartments against detached houses and what can be delivered at high and low values.

Winner: Cruden Homes West – Park View, Govan

The judges were unanimous in finding The Park View development in Govan – consisting of 42 high quality, contemporary and spacious two bedroom en-suite apartments - a worthy winner of the accolade of Best Home Design.

The tenement block is designed to follow the Glasgow tradition adapted effectively to suit modern living. It responds to its local identity, suitable in scale and provision to its suburban location and limited parking, providing drying greens that double as observable play areas. The colourful pods add distinction and modernity to the developed tradition.

Stand-out features include the provision of generous-sized windows which create a light and airy environment, while storage, which is so crucial to comfort, is well-considered within the compact living areas, with a store, utility and laundry rooms.

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Best Development - Large

Entries for this award were asked to demonstrate how developments of 30+ units enhanced both the physical environment and quality of life of residents according to the criteria of context, local integration, identity, connection, variety and sustainability.

Winner: Cruden Homes West – Park View, Govan

In addition to the previous comments in the Best Home Design category, the judges in the Best Large Development category hailed the Park View development as both thoughtful and imaginative, spot on to the brief of meeting the needs of social housing and first time buyers.

It was seen as an excellent address to the provision of housing in a challenging area through a joint development approach.

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Best Development - Small

Criteria for the judging of this award followed that for Large, but for developments of 29 units and under.

Winner: Headon Developments – The Green, Strathkinness

The Green at Strathkinness, Fife drew an array of favourable comments from the judges. These included attention to local characteristics, careful consideration of material and scale, genuine effort on local consultation occurred, and overall, sensitive solutions.

Other features which the judges praised were the judicious blend with existing streets and buildings in the centre of the village, with open space providing linkage with the school, church and village hall.

Overall, this development scored for its sensitive and inclusive approach.

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Commendation: Springfield Properties – Duncanshill, Elgin

Demonstrating accessibility and a flexible approach, the judges were impressed by the way in which Springfield's development of 29 new homes at Duncanshill, Elgin responded to local demand and context which is in-keeping with existing nearby local housing stock.

The different house types display high levels of insulation and air tightness and are built to take advantage of south-facing aspects.

The range of house styles lend themselves to a mixed community of residents, with each home built to meet the needs of the individual customer.

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Best Partnership in Planning

Entries for this award were asked to describe their approach to the delivery of partnership working and the outcomes in terms of a development successfully delivered or with detailed planning consent capable of commencement in 2013.

Judges were particularly interested to note submissions which demonstrated best value, lessons learned and replicability, with entries also welcome from Local Authority Planning and/or Housing departments.

Winner: Places for People with East Dunbartonshire Council

With 'place making' a cornerstone of current Planning and Architectural policies, the judges felt that this submission demonstrated that by placing this at the heart of the partnership at the Coal Board Site, Twechar, East Dunbartonshire, it allowed the traditional barriers which exist between professions and sectors to be removed.

At the same time the commitment to partnership working allowed the local community to play a positive and proactive role in delivering a scheme into their area which has also generated a wider understanding and confidence in the planning process.

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Best Partnership in Affordable Housing Delivery

With the continuing economic downturn highlighting the importance of partnerships in the delivery of new homes in Scotland, entries for this award were asked to describe their approach to the delivery of affordable housing, demonstrating new funding arrangements or new partnership or consortia arrangements.

Judges paid particular attention to the project's contribution to meeting local housing needs, value for money, added value/wider role benefits as well as evidence of creativity and innovation within the partnership.

Winner: Dunedin Canmore Housing with City of Edinburgh Council, Hart Builders & Lovell Partnerships

The judges were highly impressed with this large scale regeneration project in the Moredun and Hyvots areas of South Edinburgh which represents an affordable housing and regeneration partnership of national significance.

The project has resulted in the creation of 441 new homes and the refurbishment of 371 existing homes over several years, all at affordable rents.

Each construction phase was completed on time and on budget, with the judges pleased to note the incorporation of sustainable construction methods, and that the partnership won an Environmental Excellence award.

This entry demonstrated real evidence of place making, community participation and regeneration, including the establishment of residents associations, the provision of new community services, the promotion of youth activity and volunteering, training opportunities and the direct employment of 18 new apprentices.

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Commendation: West Lothian Council with Lovell Partnerships

The judges commended this ambitious programme of 545 new Council houses over eight sites across West Lothian. With a total project value of £45 million, the new homes have been designed and built to a very high standard while making an admirable contribution to meeting outstanding housing need in the West Lothian area.

The project has delivered an estimated 74 job opportunities, the majority of which have been filled by local people. And the feedback from tenants speaks volumes: to date, an impressive 95% of residents surveyed are happy with their new homes.

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Best Supporting Company

Recognising the vital role that associate members play in supporting Homes for Scotland's work, submissions for this award were asked to illustrate how the company adds value to clients or the sector in general, how it develops its business to deliver competitive advantage and include evidence of measurable objectives.

Winner: PPS Scotland

PPS Scotland's strong political and planning knowledge has been used to great effect in over half a billion pounds' worth of housing projects.

Their success may well be the result of engaging not only with the client and the press, but also through positive consultation with local communities, an area which this submission pays particular credit to.

The judges were impressed with the level of professionalism displayed in this entry, with strong testimonials backing up the company's approach to maintaining high standards and a focus on teamwork which lies at the core of their values.

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Commendation: Gillespie Macandrew

The judges praised Gillespie Macandrew for the way in which it demonstrated its commitment to supporting the home building industry as well as its increasing expertise in political lobbying.

Of particular mention, especially in this tough economic climate, are the capped fees and regular performance reports to the client which would undoubtedly prove of value and add an air of certainty.

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Homes for Scotland Home Builder of the Year

Home builders who were keen to be recognised for this headline award were asked to enter quality submissions in as many categories as possible, with three shortlisted companies going forward to compete for the accolade as follows:

- Cruden Group
- Mactaggart & Mickel Group
- Springfield Properties

Winner: Mactaggart & Mickel Group

The 800-strong audience at our 2013 Annual Lunch & Awards at the EICC on Friday 17th May voted Mactaggart & Mickel Group Home Builder of the Year.

Mactaggart & Mickel entered seven submissions with two going on to become category winners: the joined-up, “fabric-first” response to delivering 700 new homes at the Commonwealth Games’ Athletes’ Village took the award for Best Green Initiative and the demonstration of the organisation’s commitment not only to handcrafting quality homes but also to investing in its people saw it lauded as Best Employer.

Mactaggart & Mickel clearly demonstrated the scope of its expertise and commitment to effecting positive outcomes for the benefit of the home building industry as a whole across a broad range of areas.

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