

Milton Keynes 2024 Year in Review



Review of 2024

2024 was another busy year for the City of Milton Keynes, with the city emerging further as a vibrant hub of tech and innovation.

As 2024 draws to an end, we're highlighting a few business news stories, events and achievements we've been involved in throughout the year.

This year, The Times named Milton Keynes one of the best places to live in the UK, highlighting our city for being young, smart and affordable. Milton Keynes was successful in joining the Net Zero Cities programme, twinning the city with Lyon in France, and in joining the Barclays Tech Ecosystem support programme.

The city held its first ever Milton Keynes Artificial Intelligence Festival, attended by over 1000 people, and highlighting the ongoing work to boost the city's position as a leader in the tech ecosystem. This delivers on the city council's Technology, Smart City, Digital and Creative Industries Strategy, cementing Milton Keynes' global reputation as a smart city and the home of innovation.

The city has also welcomed a diverse range of new businesses, boosting the local economy, supporting job creation and enriching the visitor and shopping experience.

City of Milton Keynes in numbers: 2024

Population: 292,180

Jobs: 194,000

Businesses: 12,405

GDP: £16.21 billion

2024 National City rankings:

#2 for housing stock growth

#3 for population growth

#4 for innovation

#5 for business stock

#6 for average workplace earnings

#7 for GVA per hour

#10 for employment rate

(Centre for Cities)



Business Updates

Huel, opened its new facility in Milton Keynes, a 71,000 sq ft manufacturing and distribution unit

Tesla, electric car maker opens a new sales centre on one of the modern sites at Merton Drive

Kegstar, brewery supplier agreed a lease on a unit in the UK's first industrial and logistics park to be net zero carbon in construction, here in Milton Keynes

Mainmark, ground engineering specialists opened its new larger headquarters moving to 8,000 sq ft site in Stacey Bushes

Gi Group, national recruitment agency reopened its office in Milton Keynes

Franklins Solicitors LLP move to Ashton House, signing a lease for 10,279 sq ft

MK Dons Group acquired by a Kuwait-based consortium

Business Updates – retail and hospitality

The retail market in Milton Keynes continued to show its strength, with many new openings.

Centre:MK new openings

- Smart City Experience Centre
- Space NK
- Bill's
- Castore
- Cornish Bakery
- Entertainer
- Mint Velvet
- Office

Midsummer Place new openings

- Flannels
- Wingstop

MK One new openings

- Costa
- Burger King
- Heavenly Desserts

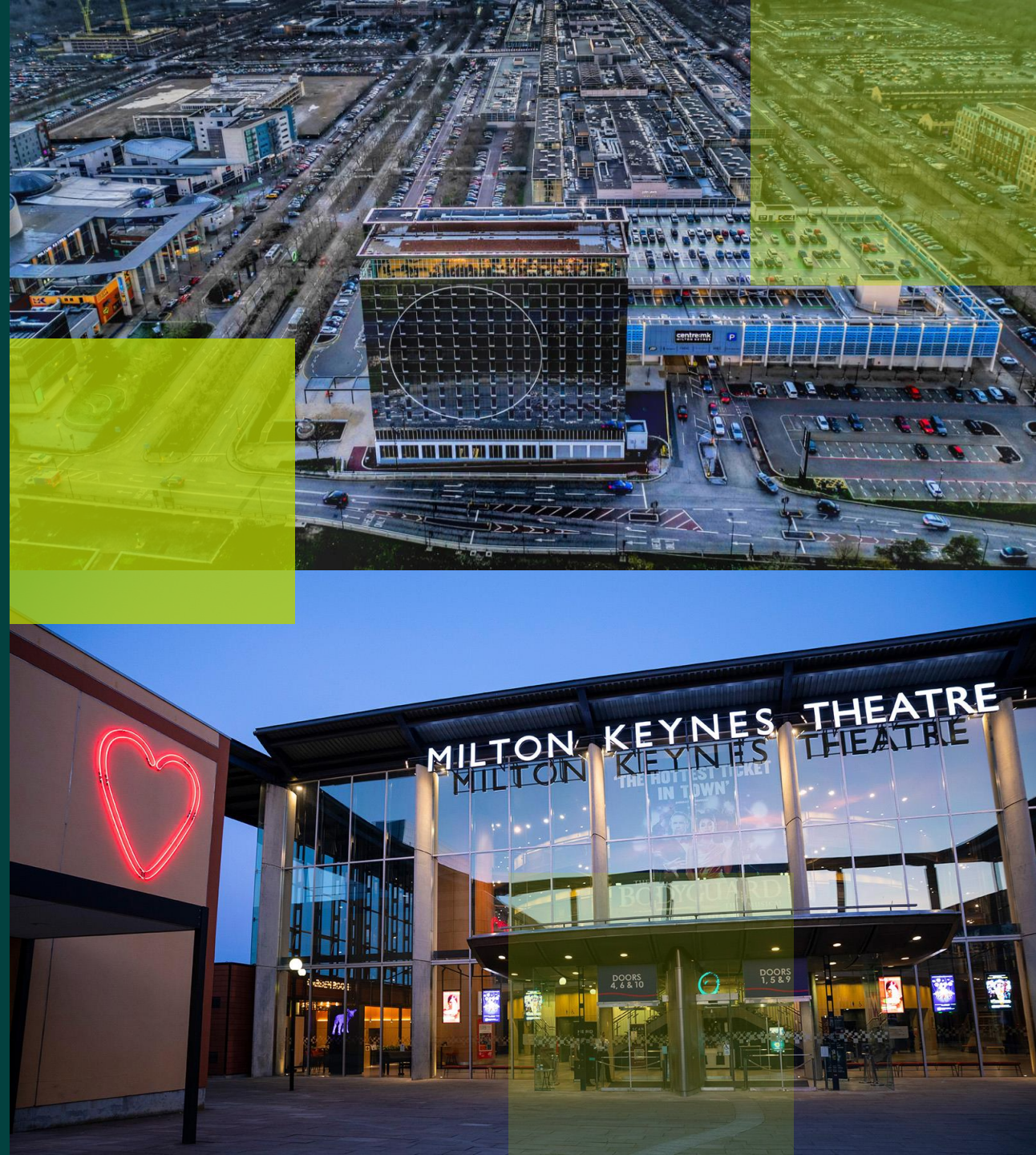
January/February

Milton Keynes crowned the UK's 'top city for productivity' by Business Name Generator

Milton Keynes welcomed new culture sector apprentices, working in prominent cultural venues in the city

Milton Keynes Gallery opened its Saul Leiter: An Unfinished World exhibit, with excellent reviews from the Guardian and the Telegraph

Red Bull unveiled RB20 at a launch event at their campus in Milton Keynes, ahead of the 2024 season



March/April

The Times named Milton Keynes one of the best places to live in the UK

Bletchley Park named Business of the Year at the prestigious Milton Keynes Business Achievement Awards, celebrating their hosting of the Global AI Safety Summit in 2023

Milton Keynes City Council publishes a five-year Technology, Smart City, Digital and Creative Industries Strategy to grow the city's global reputation as a smart city and home of innovation

The Relaunch of MK:Smart saw Milton Keynes City Council and The Open University team up once again to promote Milton Keynes as one of the world's leading smart cities

MK Tech Fund winners announced. Five local tech start-ups receive a cash injection from city council's £3.5m Economic Recovery Plan

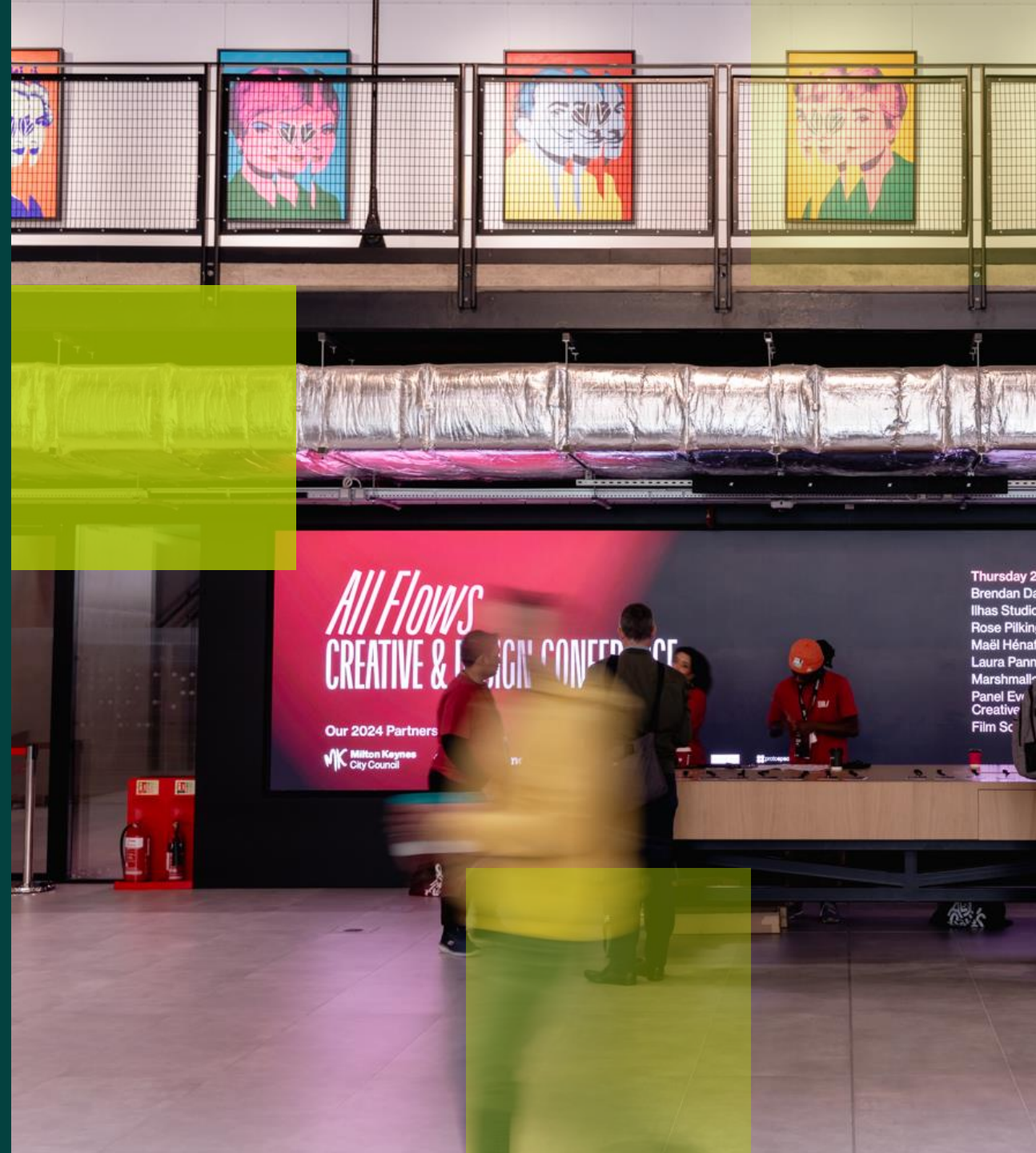


May/June

The City Council secured funding from the **Barclays Eagle Labs Ecosystem Partnership Programme** to support the Milton Keynes tech Ecosystem

All Flows design and creative conference, was back with an even more impressive programme. The two-day conference was held at Unity Place in Central Milton Keynes with hundreds of attendees from across the UK and Europe

The first Midsummer festival took place, a fun-packed free programme of music, maypoles, magic and more. Over 5k people attended



The City Council held its SME focussed event on **doing business with the City Council**

Niftylift awarded the **prestigious King's Award for Enterprise: International Trade.**

An award granted to British businesses that demonstrate exceptional performance in international expansion and commercial success



July/August

The MK City plan 2050 launched its **consultation**, sharing with businesses and residents the **draft plan** for the city's continued housing and economic growth to 2050.

Milton Keynes City Council and Destination Milton Keynes ran the 'Designed to Entertain' campaign, to encourage visits to Milton Keynes. Visits up over 35% to **Destination MK**, and the city was featured in national articles including the **British Travel Journal**.

The Smart in the City podcast hosted Cllr Shanika Mahendran who explained how Milton Keynes uses innovation and strategic partnerships to address urban challenges like sustainability, health, and social equity.



Cllr SHANIKA MAHENDRAN

Cabinet Member for Economy,
Sustainability and Innovation
City of Milton Keynes, UK



#86 Milton Keynes: Innovating for a Smarter, Greener and Equitable City



September/October

The Open Societal Challenges programme announces its winners, in a joint Milton Keynes City Council and Open University initiative

Milton Keynes successful in joining the Net Zero Cities programme, twinning the city with Lyon

Launch of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Business Narrative, free tools to help businesses promote the area and a Town Deal initiative

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Business Grant Scheme for startups and existing Businesses launched



Brazilian delegation from Sigma Park visited Milton Keynes to learn about its tech ecosystem, potential collaborations with local tech companies and educational institutions

East West Rail first test train runs between Oxford and Milton Keynes in 42 minutes

MK College Green Skills Centre opened to provide training for the experts needed to install energy storage systems, electric car charge points and solar panels

The **South Midlands Business Board**, was established to advise the South Midlands Authorities on business matters relating to economic growth and development



Milton Keynes Artificial Intelligence Festival

The first ever Milton Keynes Artificial Intelligence Festival 2024 took place from October 28 to November 1, showcasing AI and innovation in the city.

Highlights included:

- Over 2300 attendees
- 14 core and fringe events
- International press coverage including ITV & BBC News and MSN
- £25 million press reach (£37m equivalent PR Value)
- 13 partners including Bletchley Park, The Open University, Protospace, Santander, HMGCC, Connected Places Catapult and Smart City Consulting.



November/December

UK's first Smart City Experience Centre opens in Milton Keynes at Centre: MK. A pioneering initiative launched by **SMCCL**, that showcases the future of digital technology and its impact on urban living.

The centre offers the public a chance to view the latest **Ohmio** autonomous vehicles which are being trialled in the city early next year, robots and drones.

Press coverage including, BBC News and MSN

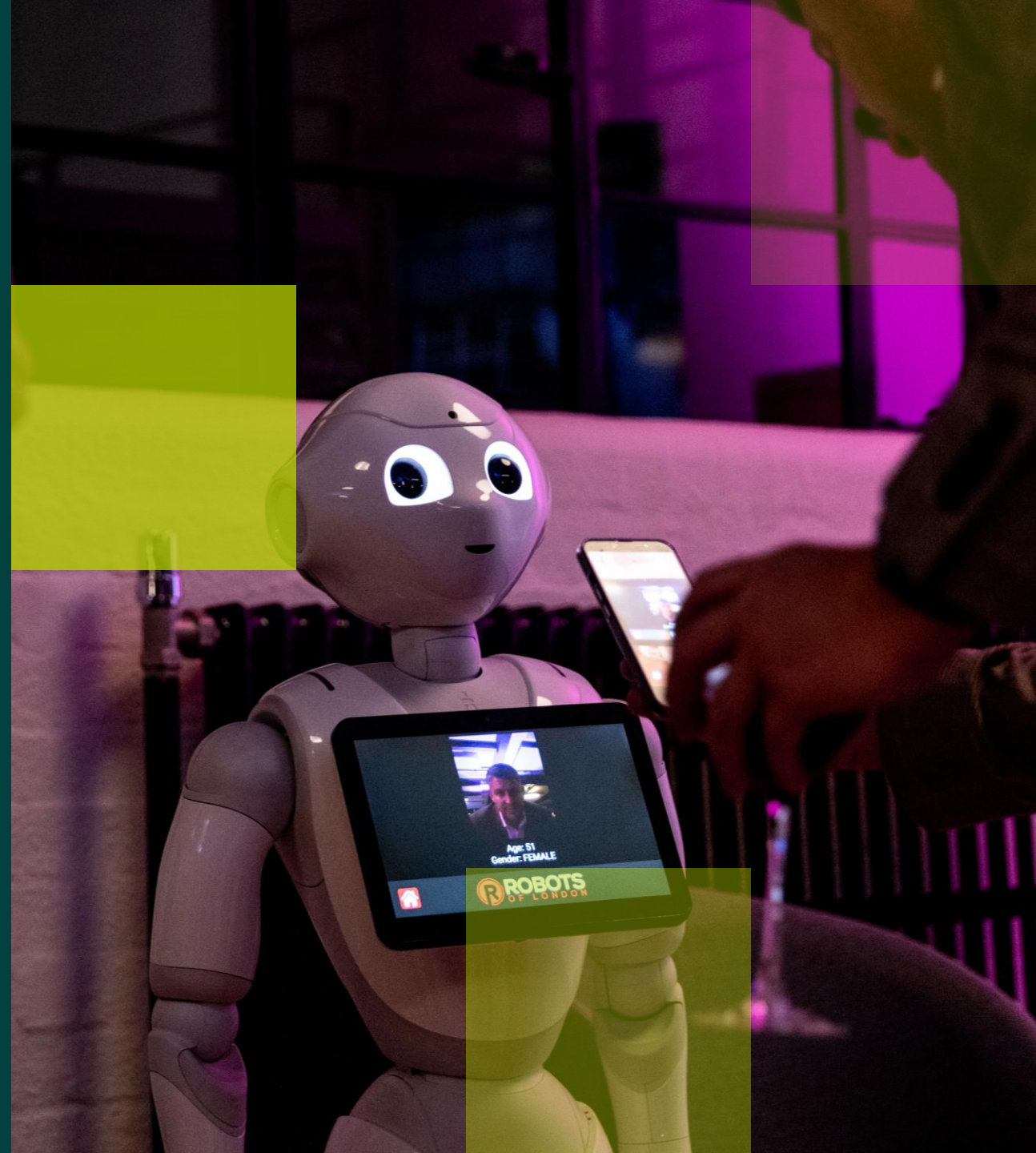


Santander X UK Awards 2024 National Final

saw twelve national finalists pitch live to an esteemed panel of judges, winning up to £25k

Drone mapping began in Milton Keynes, with Milton Keynes City Council and partners trialling the use of drones that could transform the way essential and emergency services are delivered in the future

Milton Keynes City Council unveiled its Smart City Action Plan, aimed at tackling climate change, enhancing public health and delivering more cost-efficient public services. The action plan supports the city council's designed Tech, Smart City, Digital and Creative Industries Strategy designed to grow MK's global reputation as a smart city and home of innovation



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