

DRAFT

Bredfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Bredfield Parish Council held at the Village Hall on 25th March 2024

Parish Councillors present: Nik Bestow; Hilary Harker; Anne Henderson, David Hepper, Lynn Taylor, Tony Richardson; together with District Councillor Colin Hedgley
There were 5 members of the public present.

1/250324 Apologies and approvals of absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Buckman as he was attending SALC training, this was approved. District Cllr Hedgley passed on apologies from County Councillor Elaine Bryce.

2/250344 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Cllr Hepper declared an interest in Item 13, CIL funding application, as Chair of the Village Shop.

3/250324 Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 29th January, 20th February and 20th March 2024

All of these Minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chair.

4/250324 Members of the public are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on the agenda. Reports may be received from the District and County Councillors

District Cllr Hedgley apologised for not having sent his report earlier but it has now been forwarded and it will be uploaded to the website. He highlighted the Grow your Own Scheme, ESC spending plans for 2024/25, hosting of the first-ever 'Model District Council' for schools' event, Domestic Loft Insulation offer and the funding gap forcing ESC to halt the Lowestoft Flood Barrier Scheme.

A member of the public raised the issue of ongoing flooding behind the Forge site at the Pump end of the village. It was agreed to talk to Grahame Taylor to see if there was anything he could do.

5/250324 To consider any current planning matters, including:

Previous applications, decisions still outstanding:

DC/22/2707/FUL - Creation of vehicular access - The Old Rectory, The Street, Bredfield – **Application Permitted**

DC/23/2693/FUL - Demolition of the existing commercial buildings on site and the erection of 7no dwellings and 14no commercial units on land of the former forge site - The Forge, Woodbridge Road, Bredfield – **Still awaiting decision**. Cllr Hedgley had investigated the current situation as agreed at our meeting in January. According to ESC Planning they were still awaiting further information in respect of outstanding matters raised by consultees. Cllr Richardson again raised the point that both Highways and an independent consultant, Pulsar, had objected to this application and there were several conditions in the Flood Report. Residents living in the area of this application wanting to sell their properties were being left in limbo. Cllr Hedgley again agreed to investigate with Planners but did point out that there was a due process they had to follow before any decision could be made.

DC/23/3857/FUL - Single Storey Side Extension to Existing Dwelling. Bramble Cottage, Woodbridge Road, Bredfield – **Application Permitted**

DC/23/4606/FUL -The erection of 1no. new detached bungalow with new shared vehicular access and parking area 1 Glebe Road, Bredfield – **Awaiting decision**

DC/24/0330/FUL Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, raise existing roof to form first floor accommodation and internal alterations Tojanti, Woodbridge Road, Bredfield – **Discussed at meetings on 20th February & 20th March as New Plans were submitted**

DC/24/0488/FUL Proposal: Extension to existing Cemetery St Andrews Church, The Street, Bredfield, Suffolk – **Discussed at meeting on 20th March**

6/250324 To receive an update from the Working Party on village flooding

- Letters had been sent out to all landowners and individuals stating their responsibility for ditches and drainage over their land and ditch clearing was currently being carried out in the village, A letter had also been sent to Highways and County Cllr Bryce. One report of flooding issues on resident's land had been received. As this was on the boundary of the Village Hall the VH committee had offered advice.
- The Working Party had sent SCC forms to residents who had experienced flooding and some had been returned.
- Chapel Homes had arranged for Dreams Drains to investigate drainage issues at Woods Meadow which had exacerbated the flooding at The Shingles. This had rectified the problems and the residents at The Shingles confirmed this had been effective.
- Work was underway for a new pipe at the entrance to the Meadow and would hopefully be completed in the next week or so. Residents at Chapel Farm were concerned that this work was causing lots of silt to flow their way. This should be rectified once work is completed but it could be reported to Highways to instigate clearing of the culvert.
- Caters Road - Dyno Rod had investigated pipe between two ponds and this was now flowing well. Grahame Taylor will be clearing the ditch.

7/250324 Jubilee Meadow and Orchard, including

The Terms of Reference for the BJMO Sub-Committee had been circulated and it was unanimously approved. The committee members were Stewart Belfield, Angela Dereham, Paul Wiggins and Cllr Buckman was the PC representative.

With regard to the pipe work at the meadow entrance, the BJMO Committee indicated that they appreciate that the nature of the work and the inclement weather made the scheduling of the work difficult. However, to aid future decision-making when such work takes place, the BJMO Committee would welcome updates, information and timetables – however estimated such timetables may have to be.

Botanica would be installing the new guards around the trees at the end of April, this had had to be postponed from the end of March due to the drainage work at the entrance. A replacement tree had been purchased using the BJMO Reserve funds and the map of the trees needs to be updated. It was suggested that as this was the 10th anniversary of the meadow it could be a good time to raise the profile and encourage new members – maybe a possible fundraising event.

Cllr Buckman had forwarded information regarding hedge management which had been circulated to Councillors and would be forwarded onto the BJMO Sub-Committee for discussion at a later date. The Mission Statement for the BJMO was noted.

The PC confirmed that they would continue to fund maintenance costs for the meadow at £300.00 per year. However, it was noted that this may need to be increased due to rising costs. All other costs would come from BJMO Reserve or fundraising. The drainage works would be funded from CIL as previously agreed.

8/250324 To note action from the February Sizewell C Project Update

Following the February update we have registered for email notifications in advance of wide load movements during the construction period.

9/250324 To note any further developments regarding the ditch and footpath at the Woods Meadow Development

As noted at our meeting in January, the fence was installed in February by Chapel Homes and the cones removed.

10/250324 To receive any updates from the Community Partnership Forum

Cllr Bestow and Cllr Harker had been due to attend the March meeting, however when the agenda was received it was noted that there was nothing of interest to our PC and decided to defer attendance to a future meeting.

11/250324 To receive any updates from the Road Safety Forum

Cllr Hepper had been unable to attend this meeting and again the agenda was not applicable to our Council. It was noted that these meetings were not geared to small villages.

12/250324 To adopt the Internal Control Statement & Report

Cllr Bestow had amended the SALC template and forwarded to all Councillors and it was unanimously approved to adopt this document. Cllr Bestow had also carried out an internal control check which had been sent to all Councillors. It was noted that precise powers should be recorded in the minutes under which expenditure is being approved and this will be included going forward. There also needs to be a review on the process for the Clerk’s laptop backup.

13/250324 Finances

Paid Invoices approved at meeting on 29th January 2024:

Date	Payee	Gross	VAT	For	Category	Authorised	Power
11.01.24	East Suffolk Services	308.03	51.34	Waste Collection – Jan-March	Waste	Cllr Harker	Litter Act 1983. Ss 5-6
31.01.24	L Buckman	254.84		Clerk Jan Salary	Wages	Cllr Hepper	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112
31.01.24	HMRC	8.80		PAYE Tax Jan	Wages	Cllr Hepper	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112
15.02.24	Bredfield Village Shop	1992.00		Grant for Replacement Awning	CIL	Cllr Harker	CIL Regs 2010 s.59c

Retrospective Invoices paid to be approved at meeting on 25th March

Date	Payee	Gross	VAT	For	Category	Authorised	Power
01.03.24	L Buckman	255.04		February Wages	Wages	Cllr Harker	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112
01.03.24	HMRC	8.60		February PAYE Tax	Wages	Cllr Harker	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112

Payments for approval at meeting on 25th March:

Date	Payee	Gross	VAT	For	Category	Power
21.02.24	CAS Ltd	123.00		Wildlife Friendly Village Website Hosting	Wildlife	LGA 1972 2.142
01.11.24	Bredfield Village Hall	40.00		Hire of Hall Oct 23 – Feb 24	Hall Hire	LGA 1972 s.111
19.03.24	Ernest Doe	193.34	32.33	BJMO Mower Service	BJMO	Open Spaces Act 1906 ss.9,10,15
18.03.24	Bredfield Village Hall	15.00		Hire of Hall March 2024	Hall Hire	LGA 1972 s.111
31.03.24	L Buckman	254.34		March Wages	Wages	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112
31.03.24	HMRC	8.80		March PAYE Tax	Wages	LGA 1972 s.111 s.112

All these invoices were unanimously approved for payment.

Breakdown of Income received since last meeting:

04.03.24	Interest	Parish Reserve	£62.85
04.03.24	Interest	BJMO Reserve	£6.49

Cllr Bestow had circulated a **Finance Report and bank reconciliation** to all Councillors showing a balance of £21073.17. This was approved and is available to view on the website.

It was noted that East Suffolk Services Trade Refuse costs for 2024/25 are £975.00 plus VAT.

CIL – to consider any applications for funding

An application had been received from the Village Shop for two display freezers to replace one elderly unit at a cost of £3972.00. Councillors unanimously agreed to approve this purchase. Cllr Bestow pointed out that the PC should purchase these freezers in order to claim back the VAT and then gift to the shop which is covered under Legislative Powers.

It was noted that we will be due the following additional CIL funding in the future:

Woods Meadow	£11905
Wyndways	£8386
Ivy Meadow	£51791

The Clerk was in the process of completing the CIL Return 2023/24. This will be forwarded to all Councillors for approval at our next meeting. It will then need to be uploaded to the website and a copy sent to ESC by the deadline of 31.12.24.

The Clerk has booked the 2023/24 Audit to be carried out by SALC during week commencing 6th May 2024. All documentation will need to be uploaded to a shared folder seven working days before this date. The Clerk will also be completing the VAT reclaim during April.

14/250324 Actions taken under Delegated Powers

Additional expenditure of £336 for works to the BJMO drainage had been agreed via email and confirmed at our meeting on 20th March 2024.

15/250324 Review of the following policies and procedures for Audit purposes:

- Risk Assessment
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations

Copies of these policies had been forwarded to all Councillors to review. The Risk Assessment required no amendments. It was agreed to merge our Internet Banking into the Financial Regulations and there were a few additional minor amendments. Cllr Bestow will re-circulate, amend date and upload to the website. The Governance Calendar was also reviewed, amended and approved for uploading to the website.

16/250324 Review Data Retention Compliance

The Clerk was aware of the regulations for retention of data and would comply with the timeframes.

17/250324 To agree date and arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed to hold a separate Annual Parish Meeting this year rather than hold it on the same date as the PC AGM. Cllr Hepper will contact the Village Hall to book Friday 17th May 2024 for the APM and the AGM will go ahead as planned on Monday 22nd May. Village organisations are invited to attend and report on events during the previous year. Wine will be provided.

18/250324 Correspondence, and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

Cllr Hepper had received a communication from Mr & Mrs Woods at Bredfield House querying traffic calming measures on Dallinghoo Road. This would need to be approved by Highways however Cllr Hepper agreed to investigate our options.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.00.

MEETING DOCUMENTS

BJMO Sub-Committee Terms of Reference

Proposal

1. The management of Bredfield Jubilee Meadow and Orchard is delegated to the BJMO Committee.
2. The Committee will have a minimum of three members, one of which must be a Parish Councillor. Members of the committee are appointed by the Parish Council (under the recommendations of the committee).
3. There will be a designated Chair appointed by the committee.
4. The Committee will hold ordinary meetings on at least three occasions per annum (March, June and September).
 - a. A minimum of 3 committee members must be present.
 - b. Ordinary meetings will be publicised at least 5 days before being held.
 - c. Members of the public may attend Ordinary meetings.
 - d. Formal minutes will be kept and published on the Parish Council website.
5. The Parish council are responsible for the finances of the BJMO
6. BJMO finances will be accounted for by the PC under a separate heading.
7. Bredfield Parish Council will allocate an agreed annual fund for management of the meadow and orchard, with the money added to the BJMO funds. In the event of an underspend, money may be carried over into the following financial year.
8. Any funds raised or donations received for the BJMO will be ringfenced and only used to support BJMO activity.
9. The BJMO Committee will provide a five-year rolling forecast of expenditure as part of the PC budgeting cycle.
10. All expenditure must be authorised in accordance with Parish Council Financial rules.
11. The Committee will submit an annual report to Bredfield Parish Council's Annual Meeting. At least one member of the Committee will attend the Annual Meeting to answer any questions raised.
12. The Committee will provide an update on activities at each full Parish Council meeting.
13. Information regarding Bredfield Jubilee Meadow and Orchard will be posted on the Bredfield Parish Council website.
14. Committee rules should be agreed at Ordinary Committee meetings and will be kept to the PC website.
15. Committee rules must align with the Committee brief.
16. The Committee is responsible for ensuring any maintenance or enhancement to the meadow is carried out in a manner that is sensitive to the biodiversity, sustainability and community use of the meadow and orchard.
17. The BJMO Committee will organise and publicise a minimum of 2 events each year.
18. The BJMO Committee will recruit and coordinate local volunteers to undertake required work in the meadow and orchard. Volunteers are covered by insurance held by Bredfield Parish Council.
19. The BJMO Committee will liaise and, where appropriate, work with other relevant groups and organisations
20. The BJMO Committee will not merge with other organisations in an official capacity, nor will it provide funds for other groups or organisations

Background

This is about striking a balance between our obligations as a Parish Council and the efficient and effective management of the Jubilee Meadow.

Under our standing orders (see extract below) we need to:

- Determine the terms of reference of the BJMO
- Determine the number and dates of Ordinary Meetings of the BJMO
Ordinary meetings have minutes, are open to the public and need to be publicised. Other meetings (Working Party meetings) don't have these obligations.
- Agree the quorum for BJMO meetings.
- Appoint the members of the BJMO Committee

The proposed terms of reference are based on an earlier draft of the BJMO guiding principles amended to conform with our Standing Orders both in content and format.

Standing Orders – Committees (Section 4)

- a. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b. **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non- councillors.**
- d. The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer two days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
 - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub- committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

BREDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT

1. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Bredfield Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that all its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and that all funds are used economically, efficiently and effectively.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Parish Council is responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its function.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Parish Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. THE INTERNAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

The Council:

- a. The Parish Council reviews its obligations and objectives at the November meeting.
- b. The budget for the following financial year is approved at the January meeting. This includes setting the level of precept for the following financial year.
- c. A Councillor is appointed to have responsibility for bank reconciliation checks.
- d. The Parish Council meets six times each year and monitors progress against its aims and objectives at each meeting by receiving relevant reports from the councillor with financial responsibility.
- e. The council carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

Clerk to the Council/Responsible Finance Officer:

- a. The Parish Clerk acts as the Council's advisor and administrator.
- b. The Clerk is also the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances.
- c. The Clerk is responsible for advising on the day to day compliance with laws and regulations that the Council is subject to and for managing risks.
- d. The Clerk also provides advice to help the Council ensure that its procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.

Payments:

- a. Any purchase of goods or services must be approved by the Parish Council before being made.
- b. All payments are matched to the appropriate authority to purchase and are reported to the Parish Council for approval.
- c. Two members of the Parish Council must authorise each and every payment. The authorising officers should consider each payment against the relevant council minute and the supporting invoice before approval.
- d. All authorising officers must be members of the Parish Council. Delegation is not permitted.

Income:

All income is received and banked in Bredfield Parish Council’s name in a timely manner and reported at Parish Council meetings.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management:

The Parish Council reviews its risk assessment annually in May and regularly reviews its systems and controls.

Internal Audit:

As part of its internal control, the Parish Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council.

External Audit:

The council’s external auditors submit an annual certificate of audit which is presented to the Parish Council and published in June.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The council has responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which should include a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit. The results of that review must be considered by the Parish Council, which should also approve the Statement of Internal Control.

Chairman

RFO/Clerk

Approved and adopted by Bredfield Parish Council.
Minute Number and Meeting Date:

Internal Control Report 2023

The Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2015 aims to strengthen governance and accountability through requirements related to internal control and internal audit.

Whilst the Parish Council has reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit (independence, competence, proportionate and scope), it has a requirement levied on it to ensure that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control:

‘The regulations require active participation by members in providing positive assurance to the electors of their stewardship of public money. The framework of accountability is risk-based i.e. level of control and management must be appropriate to the risk involved. The Council must determine the most appropriate method of internal control... care should be taken to ensure that internal control tests are proportionate and relevant and that they are neither seen as, nor intended as, undue interference in the RFO’s day to day management of financial affairs.’

As part of its internal control, the Parish Council has appointed a non-signatory Councillor to conduct a review of the system of internal control with a written report of any findings to be submitted to the Council.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE	COMMENTS (check documents and initial)
Ensuring an up to date Register of Assets	Y	Completed. I reviewed the asset list and compared it with the last list.
Regular maintenance arrangement for physical assets	Y	Maintenance schedule added to asset list. Reserve created to reflect the non-yearly nature of maintenance.
Annual review of risk and the adequacy of Insurance cover	Y	Risk assessment published. Adequacy of insurance cover not checked.
Annual review of financial risk	Y	Validated the previous spreadsheet and rewrote, removing the dependency on Macros.
Awareness of Standing Orders and Financial regulations	Y	Revised Standing Orders and Financial regulations scheduled to be discussed at March meeting as on review they required some minor changes.
Adoption of Financial and Standing Orders	Y	Updated version scheduled for approval at March meeting
Regular reporting on performance by contractors	Y	No issues with SALC. No issues with East Suffolk District Council.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE	COMMENTS (check documents and initial)
Annual review of contracts (where appropriate)	N	Not Applicable
Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed	Y	Reviewed. Process changed and finance spreadsheet updated. Parish Clerk trained on revisions. Copies of bank statements are now provided by the Clerk as part of the bank reconciliation process.
Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure	Y	I carry these out prior to each scheduled meeting. See meeting minutes.
Recording in the minutes or appendices of the minutes the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved	Y	Test failed. Request that future meeting minutes include this information made.
Payments supported by invoices, authorised and minuted.	Y	See meeting minutes for evidence.
Regular scrutiny of income records to ensure income is correctly received, recorded and banked	Y	See financial records and meeting minutes
Scrutiny to ensure precept recorded in the cashbook agrees to District Council notification	Y	https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Council-Tax/Town-and-Parish-Precept-requirement-2023-24-.pdf Checked.
Contract of employment for Parish Clerk annually reviewed.	Y	Checked - See email exchange. PAYE and NI is managed by SALC.
VAT correctly accounted for VAT payments identified, recorded and reclaimed in the cashbook	Y	Checked - See email exchange regarding recovery.
Regular financial reporting to Parish Council	Y	Meeting minutes and supporting Finance Report checked.
Regular budget monitoring statements as reported to Parish Council	Y	Meeting minutes and supporting Finance Report checked.
Compliance with DCLG Guide <i>Open & Accountable Local Government</i> 2014, Part 4: Officer Decision Reports	Y	All decisions made by the Parish Council were done at Parish Council meetings and appropriately recorded in the minutes.

CONTROL TEST	TEST DONE	COMMENTS (check documents and initial)
Compliance with Local Transparency Code Of 2014: Items of expenditure incurred over £500	Y	All financial transactions for the previous financial year are available on the Parish Council website.
Verifying that the Council is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation requirements Are the following in place? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit / Impact Assessment • Privacy Notices • Procedures for dealing with Subject Access Requests • Procedure for dealing with Data breaches • Data Retention & Disposal Policies 	Y	All in order and available on the internet. However the Parish Council's processes for dealing with Subject Access requests and data breaches requires review
Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept for safekeeping	Y	Laptop back-up process requires review. Currently the hard disc backup is kept in the same place as the laptop. Copies of the signed minutes should be scanned.
Procedures in place for recording and monitoring Members' Interests and Gifts of Hospitality	Y	Members interests are refreshed annually.
Adoption of Codes of Conduct for Members	Y	Passed
Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Y	Passed

Date of review of system of Internal Controls.....

Review of system of Internal Controls carried out by:

Name.....Signature.....

Report submitted to Council (date).....

(minute reference)

Next review of system of Internal Controls due.....

Additional comments by reviewer:

DRAFT

Bredfield Parish Council Governance Calendar

Month	Meeting Number	Key Meeting Items / Actions	Actions between meetings & additional preparation for forthcoming agenda items
April			Publicise date of Annual Parish Meeting
			Publish Governance Documents
			Prepare & Circulate final accounts for previous year
			Agree and submit VAT reclaim for previous year
May	1	Agree and publish Accounts for previous year	
		Review latest Bank Balances and Financial Position	
		SALC Internal Controls Template	
		Annual Review and Update of Risk Assessment	
		Annual Review and Update of Internal Controls	
June			Publish annual audit return
July	2	Review latest Bank Balances and Financial Position	Annual review of PC section of website
August			
September	3	Review latest Bank Balances and Financial Position	Raise input for next financial year plan
			Annual review of PC assets
			Annual review of Insurance
October			Prepare draft financial plan/ budget for forthcoming year
November	4	Review latest Bank Balances and Financial Position	
		Discuss financial plan / budget for forthcoming year	
December			
January	5	Review latest Bank Balances and Financial Position	Submit Precept requirement
		Agree Precept.	
		Agree and Publish Budget for following year	
		Review Councillor Responsibilities	
February			
March	6	Agree date and Agenda for Annual Parish Meeting	
		Discuss current year draft financial summary report	
		End of Year Actions – All	

		Review Data Retention Compliance	
		Review and Agree Governance Documents	

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