



SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2026

Community Calm



MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY THROUGH NATURE



Across Berkshire, RBWM and Slough, local NHS data show that more people are seeking support for their mental health than in previous years. According to NHS England, referrals to NHS Talking Therapies now average over 160,000 a month, with many areas — including ours — seeing increased pressure on crisis pathways. These trends highlight how important early, steady support has become.

Community Calm offers a non-clinical, community based alternative. Our work is guided by 12-step principles before personalities: honesty, humility and doing the right thing. These principles help create predictable, grounded spaces where people can settle, reflect and rebuild confidence at a manageable pace.

Safeguarding is central to our approach. Because our groups are small and consistent, our trained professionals and lived-experience volunteers can often spot early signs of distress or crisis and respond before things escalate. This early-recognition role is increasingly valuable given rising demand for urgent mental-health support.

Rather than focusing on global problems or crisis narratives, we guide attention toward steady, calm aspects of the natural world. Research continues to show that time in nature can reduce anxiety, improve mood and support social connection. Through Green Social Prescribing, we offer access to green spaces, animals and quiet outdoor environments that our members may not reach alone.

The animals at Heroes Berkshire provide a simple, regulating presence. An alpaca may wander past without noticing anyone's worries; a chicken may sit beside someone without realising it is offering comfort. This quiet, non-reactive environment helps people feel calmer without needing to talk everything through.

Nature becomes more than a backdrop — it offers a quiet sense of companionship, a reminder that peace still exists in the world. Many people describe this as a small but meaningful shift: feeling held by something larger than their difficulties, and finding community as a place where they can reconnect and feel less alone.

"I was really struggling when I came. I didn't think I was going to make it as everything at home is so stressful. I feel much better after seeing you all. Thank You." - (CC Member)

NATURE • COMMUNITY • WELLBEING • BELONGING • HOPE

A Growing Community



Between March and July, we have record attendances since launching two years ago.

- Our community has come together for:
- Nature-based recovery sessions
- Creative wellbeing
- Conservation activities
- Animal-assisted volunteering
- Gentle movement outdoors



Responding to Local Need in Slough & RBWM



Community Calm responds to the mental health, loneliness, cultural stigma and access-to-green-space barriers faced by many local people.

We are the only Green Social Prescribing provider consistently delivering weekly nature-based mental health support across both Slough and the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Meeting DEFRA’s Countryside Inclusion Priorities

- Guided, accesible, welcoming entry points into nature
- Closed, confidential groups for safety and trust - no photos of individuals or social media posts
- Transport guidance to remove access barriers
- Kind, compassionate, trained volunteers who take time to listen
- Regular trips to parks and gardens on The Crown Estate and National Trust to open up green spaces for everyone

COLLABORATION IN ACTION

Hope Recovery College Partnership

This summer, we delivered a 8-week programme in Herschel Park, Slough, designed to build confidence, connection and hope through nature, creativity and gentle group activities. All students who joined said they wished to continue receiving our support.





Creating Memories Together



This summer has been full of connection, discovery and joy. From new beginnings to shared adventures, here are some of the moments that made it so special.



A New Home in Maidenhead

We're delighted to be part of The Wildlife Trust's Woolley Firs Environmental Education Centre. A beautiful woodland setting where we'll continue to grow, learn and support our community.



Savill Garden Wellbeing Walk

A peaceful guided walk through stunning gardens and woodland, encouraging mindfulness, movement and connection.

Generously supported by The Crown Estate.



Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

A sincere thank you to our amazing volunteers. Your professional and lived experiences make everything we do possible. We couldn't do it without you.



Kew Wakehurst Nature Connect Trip

A wonderful day exploring ancient woodland, wildflower meadows, sensory trails and the inspiring Millennium Seed Bank.

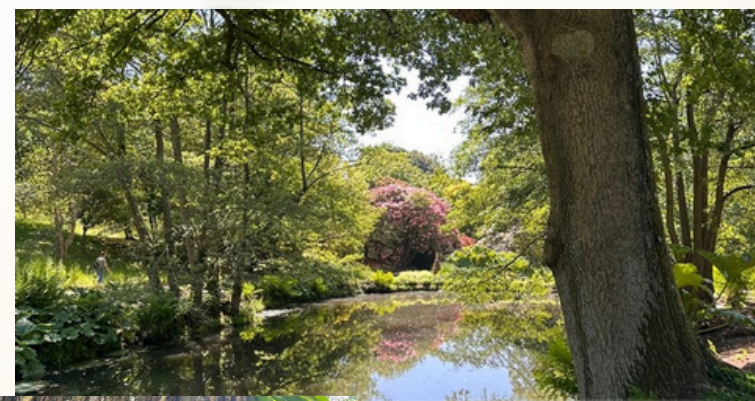
Nature, learning and laughter in equal measure.



Community led.
Nature connected.
Memories forever.



Thank you to everyone who continues to make Community Calm CIC what it is today.



“

The Mudford Quay trip was my first time at the seaside in years. I didn't think I'd ever go again.



Celebrating Our Two-Year Anniversary

A celebration with The Mayor of RBWM, Cllr. Sian Martin and members of the Maidenhead Social Prescribing Team and The Wildlife Trust

2
Years
Together



By the end of the day, I felt so relaxed. I laughed, I chatted, and I just felt good. Thank you.

”

- Member reflection from our Mudford Quay trip



Outcome Data: What Members Told Us

We asked members to tell us how Community Calm has impacted their wellbeing and their experience of support. Here's what they said.

94%

said Community Calm made accessing support easier or much easier.

89%

felt more positive about local support since attending.

82%

said Community Calm fills a gap in local provision.

Thank you to everyone who shared their feedback. Your voices help shape what we do.

In their own words...

“Community Calm gives me hope on the hard days.”



“I feel more confident to try new things and be around people.”

“It's reduced my isolation so much. I feel part of something again.”



“Being in nature and doing creative activities helps me leave the house and lifts my mood.”

“It's a safe space where I feel listened to and cared for.”



“Community Calm has been a lifeline for me. It has quite literally saved my life.”

I waited over a year for help. By then, I was really struggling.

- Community Calm member

I've been referred back to my GP four times. It's exhausting.

- Community Calm member



System Failures and Delays

Many members told us about long waits, repeated referrals and being passed between services. Community Calm exists because the system isn't working for everyone and there is little ongoing support post clinical care or those with caring responsibilities.



Thank You

To everyone who walks with us, supports us, refers to us, volunteers with us, funds us and believes in what we do—thank you. You make this work possible.



NHS Endorsements

“

The service you provide to the community is truly remarkable. Your efforts have made a meaningful difference in the lives of so many people, and your positive impact continues to inspire appreciation and respect.

SOCIAL
PRESCRIBING

LINKWORKER
MAIDENHEAD

“

Quite a few of our members from Let's Connect currently attend Community Calm groups and they regularly tell us how much they enjoy the sessions and value the calm, supportive, nature-based approach. It's been lovely to see the positive impact the group has had on them.

”

Let's
Connect
BHFT

Funding & Gratitude

We extend our thanks to our funders:



The Bayliss Trust — for your continued belief in our mission and the communities we serve.



Slough One Fund — for supporting grassroots mental health recovery and nature connection.



National Lottery Community Fund - Thank you to players of the National Lottery for helping grow and build a better community



Consistency, Safeguarding & Trust



Closed Groups: We run closed groups and encourage peer connection over the digital world. This stable environment enables meaningful connection and supports emotional wellbeing.



Trauma-Informed Facilitation: All activities are trauma-informed and led by experienced professional practitioners who prioritise choice, consent and pacing.



Culturally Sensitive Practice: We honour diverse backgrounds, faiths and identities. Our approach is inclusive, respectful and co-created with communities.

We are grateful to **Slough CVS** and **WAM Get Involved** for their ongoing guidance, training and infrastructure support.

We thank Dawn and Laurie Dingwall for providing us space each week on the farm. Our community thrives with your support and often it is the first point of interest for many referrals.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, our long-term strategy focuses on:

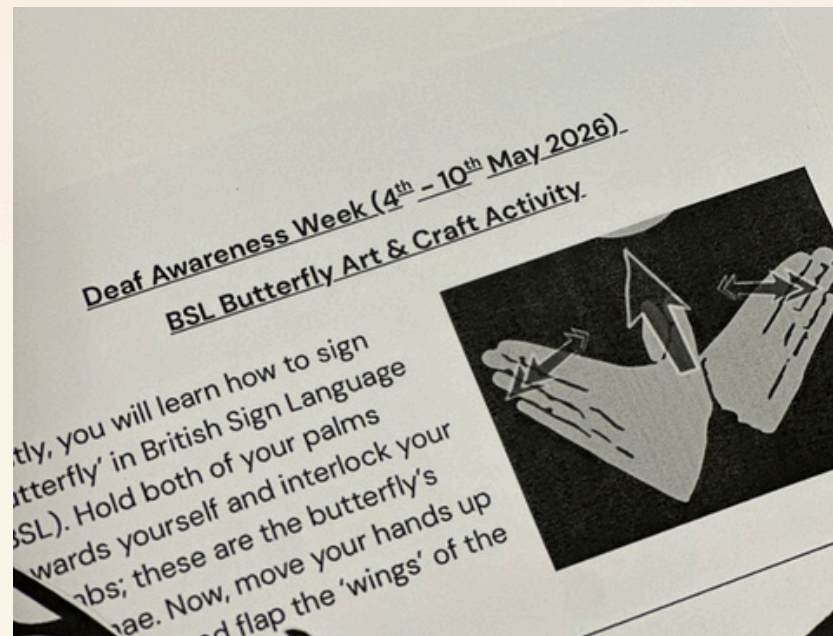


- Strengthening the Green Social Prescribing pathway across health and community sectors.
- Expanding volunteering and peer support opportunities to build skills and confidence.
- Deepening research partnerships to evidence impact and shape best practice.
- Enhancing conservation and environmental education for nature and climate awareness.
- Increasing access across Slough and RBWM, reaching more communities and reducing barriers.
- Building a sustainable community-led model rooted in collaboration and shared leadership.

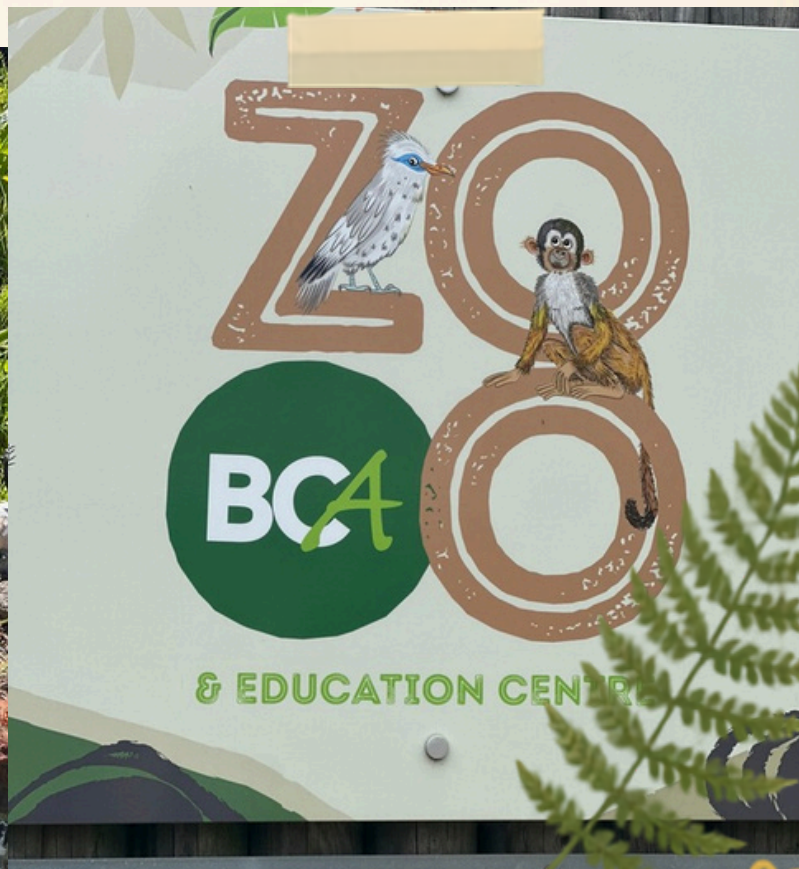
Our vision remains simple: Mental Health Recovery Through Nature.



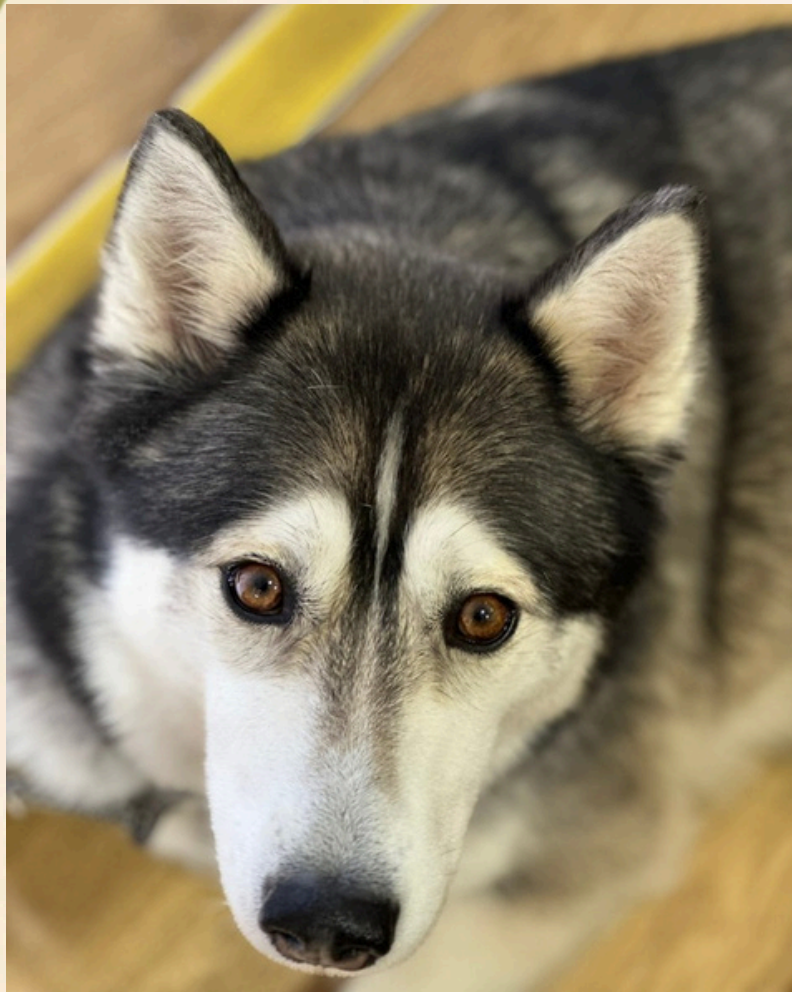
Summer Photo Gallery



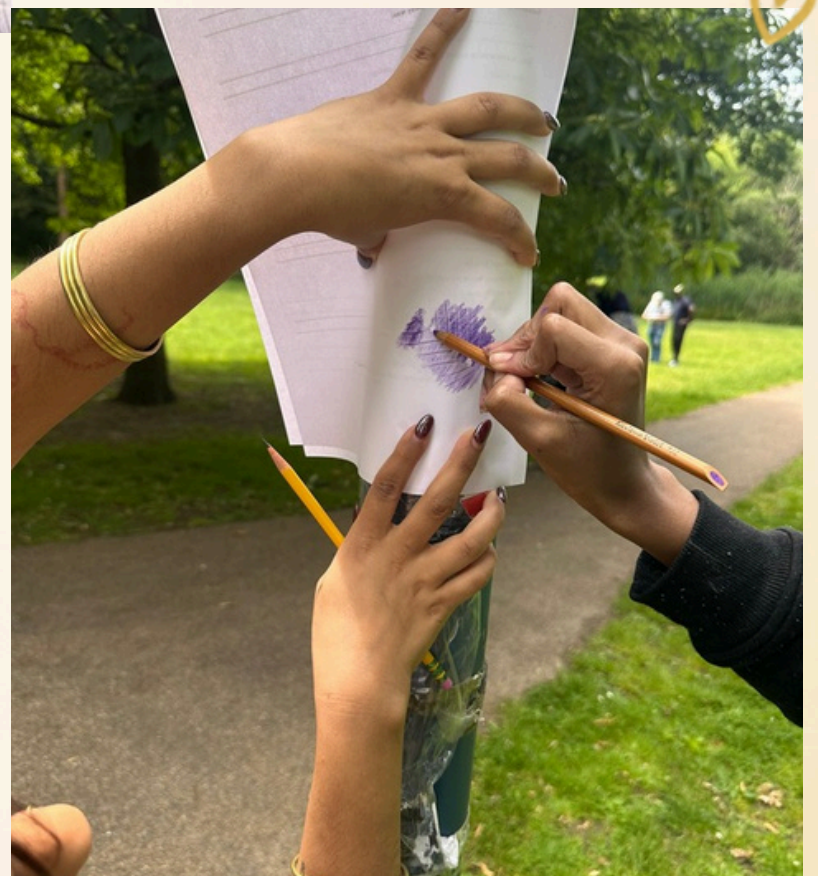
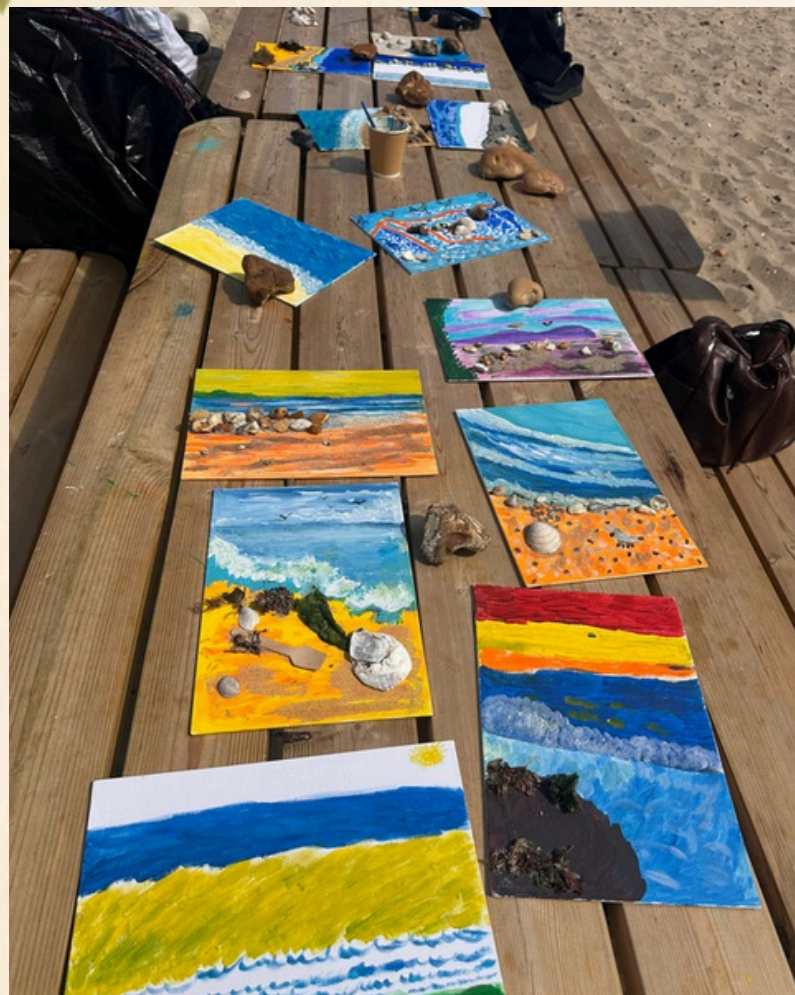
Summer Photo Gallery



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Support Community Calm

Our work is only possible thanks to the generosity of our funders, supporters, volunteers, and local community. We believe that access to high-quality mental health support should never be a luxury. Every day, we advocate for those who come through our doors seeking hope, connection, and recovery.

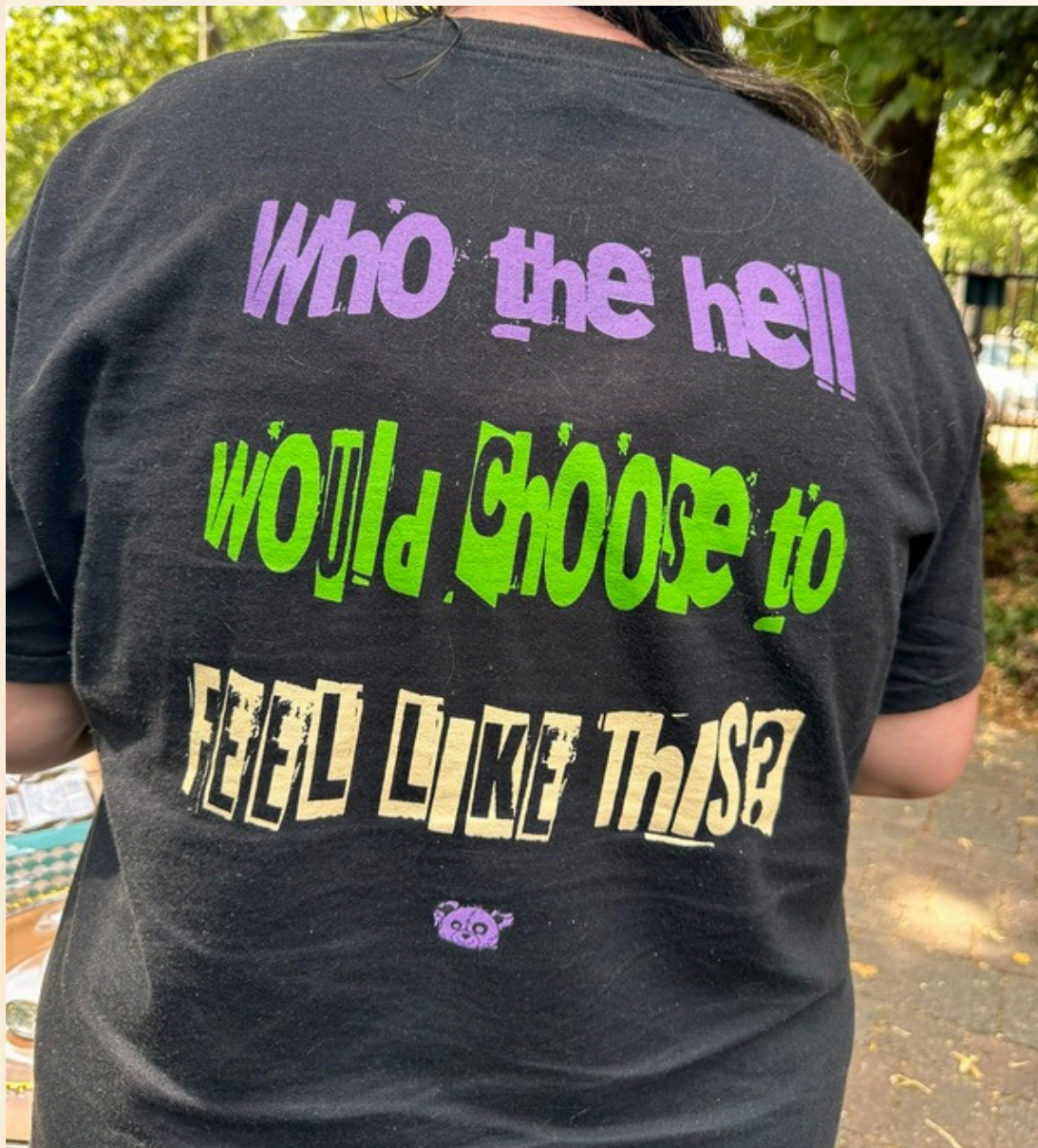
If you would like to support Community Calm by making a donation, whether large or small, we would be truly grateful.

Please speak to one of our volunteers to find out how you can make a contribution.

Every donation helps us continue providing life-changing, nature-based mental health recovery programmes for those who need them most.

Every donation makes a difference.

Thank you for your kindness, generosity, and support.



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