

The background of the entire image is a photograph of Fulham Palace. It features a large, arched stone entrance in the center, with a brick wall above it. To the right, there is a window with white shutters. In the foreground, several pink cosmos flowers are in bloom, with some buds still visible. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

Fulham Palace House & Garden

Annual Review 2019/20

Fulham Palace Trust

Fulham Palace is the historic home of the Bishops of London. For over 1,300 years, the Bishops retreated to the Palace and surrounding gardens, away from the crowded city. Now the house and botanic garden are open free of charge for everyone, offering an extraordinary visitor experience in the heart of London.

In April 2011, Fulham Palace Trust was established to manage, restore and promote Fulham Palace, and is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Patron of Fulham Palace

Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall

Board of Trustees / Directors

Fiona Beatty (appointed 31 March 2020)

Gordon Edington, CBE (resigned 31 March 2020)

Phillip A Emery, BEng, MA, FSA, MIFA

Deborah Farley-Persaud (appointed 31 March 2020)

Thomas Hackett (resigned 31 March 2020)

John King

Alison Lightbown

Fiona McWilliams (appointed 31 March 2020)

Caroline Needham

Victoria Quinlan

Kevin Rogers

Revd Penny Seabrook (appointed 21 January 2020)

Robbie Sommerville (appointed 31 March 2020)

Mariana Spater, chair

Finance Committee

Fiona Beatty (appointed 20 July 2020)

Gordon Edington, CBE (resigned 31 March 2020)

Thomas Hackett (resigned 31 March 2020)

Victoria Quinlan, chair

Robbie Sommerville (appointed 20 July 2020)

Mariana Spater

We are committed to:

- Maintaining the historic buildings and gardens and safeguarding, documenting, conserving and interpreting the collections.
- Maximizing access to all and providing a high-quality experience for every visitor.
- Developing exhibitions, educational programmes, tours and publications which enhance the appreciation and understanding of Fulham Palace, its gardens and collections.
- Ensuring that trading activities, event money, function income, grants, and other sources of income provide sufficient financial resources to meet the Trust's objectives.



Directors of Fulham Palace Enterprises Community Interest Company

Victoria Quinlan, chair

Mariana Spater

Officers

Siân Harrington, chief executive officer and company secretary



Chair's review

For Fulham Palace, 2019/20 was a year of reawakening and reconnection. The completion of our £3.8 million capital project has transformed the house and garden, offering our visitors a series of inspiring experiences across the site.

The restoration of the Tudor section of the Palace has meant that we have finally been able to restore the largely complete Tudor courtyard, giving visitors a stunning sense of stepping back in time as soon as they pass through the entrance. More historic rooms are now part of the visitor experience, as well as a new museum and dedicated exhibition space to engage our visitors with the fascinating history of Fulham Palace and the Bishops of London. For the first time, the Palace rooms and museum are open daily, and we have welcomed 26,000 visitors since May 2019.

In the botanic garden we have opened up the view across the river, re-establishing our historic connection to the Thames. The newly planted Cultivating Compton borders reunite Fulham Palace with the species Bishop Compton grew in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, offering visitors the opportunity to experience this important part of the garden's history through a living plant collection.

Our learning programme continues to go from strength to strength, connecting with a record 27,267 people in 2019/2020. In November we were awarded The Sandford Award for high achievement in heritage education. Our varied educational activities were all praised for their excellent quality and unique content.

We have been able to improve the visitor experience and strengthen our finances by the addition of a new retail space, which, along with new office spaces for business rentals, is providing the Trust with much needed income. As we look to the future, rebuilding our financial reserves to a more robust level is a key focus.

None of this would have been possible without support, and we are grateful to the Church Commission and to all of our supporters and funders, including The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF), donors, The Friends of Fulham Palace, individual and corporate Patrons, our staff, led by Siân Harrington, and volunteers.

Now we move forward to the next chapter in the story of this magnificent site. There will no doubt be challenges ahead. At the time of writing this, Fulham Palace is closed to the public for the first time, since opening its doors over 40 years ago, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Trust will undoubtedly feel the effects of pandemic, both in the immediate future and in years to come, but I am confident that the solid foundation we have built and the strong relationship we have developed with our donors and our local community will see us through this crisis and toward sunnier times.

Mariana Spater
Chair of Trustees

Highlights of the year

Reopening of Fulham Palace

On Saturday 25 May 2019, Fulham Palace opened its doors wide after a three-year, £3.8 million restoration project, part-funded by a £2m grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Over 2,590 visitors were welcomed during the opening weekend celebrations, which included our first family fun day – Tudor May Day.

For the first time, visitors were able to experience the redesigned visitor journey, which starts in the extensively restored Tudor courtyard. The seamlessly linked welcome centre, shop, museum and exhibition spaces occupy historic rooms around the courtyard, many of which people have seen for the first time. The museum, double the size of the previous one, has been completely reinterpreted, providing visitors with special insights into the long and varied history of the site and the Bishops of London.

In the garden, historic paths and gateways have been reinstated, opening up the whole site and making it easier to walk around. New beds have also been filled with plants originally grown at the Palace over 300 years ago, helping visitors connect with the story of Bishop Compton, whose collection of plants from around the world made the garden famous.

“

“I’ve been coming here for over 30 years; today I saw new parts of the Palace for the very first time and I was able to share it with my daughter. Thank you for all your hard work!” – visitor



Community archaeology

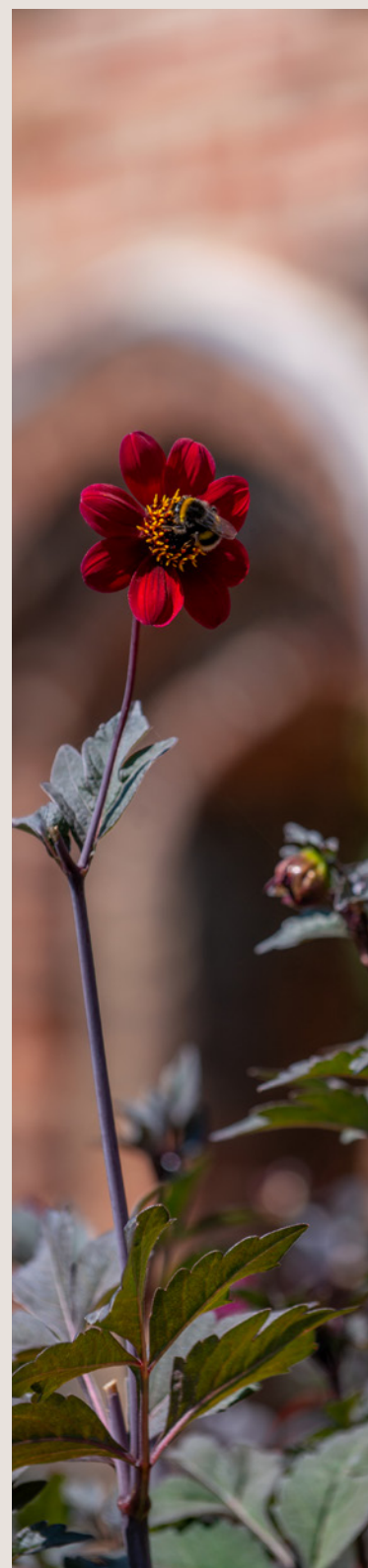
Our community archaeology activities remain a very popular part of our learning programme, appealing across a wide range of age groups, and enabling us to share with visitors the stories of the site’s 6,000-year history. This year we increased the number of opportunities available, both on site and through outreach activities, including 12 talks and tours by our community archaeologist Alexis Haslam attended by over 670 adults and children. We continued to engage with young adults through west London’s only Young Archaeologists’ Club (YAC), while our archaeology volunteers got hands-on re-boxing all the finds from past digs at the Palace undertaken by the Fulham Archaeological Rescue Group (FARG). These are now being assessed, revealing more of the story of this incredible site.

Natural play area

In September, we opened our new natural play area. Generously funded by Groundwork London through the Western Riverside Environmental Fund (WREF), the area features carved logs and wooden structures built from wood saved from previous tree work on site. The design focuses around encouraging families to get hands on with nature, sparking creativity in order to encourage a lifelong love of nature. It has quickly become the favourite area for our younger visitors.

Archive volunteers

A major part of our restoration programme included a volunteer archive research project. Over three years, 33 specially trained and supported volunteers donated 3,338 hours finding, reviewing and recording archival documents related to Fulham Palace. After visiting libraries and archives, such as The British Library, Lambeth Palace Library and London Metropolitan Archives, the volunteers wrote short essays about their findings to inform the new interpretation throughout the museum and garden. We are hugely grateful for their support and dedication.



Plant research

This year we continued to uncover the fascinating history of our Grade II* listed botanic garden. Through his research at the Sir Hans Sloane Herbarium in the Natural History Museum, botanist Dr Mark Spencer was able to build on the work initially done by Lear Associates, discovering more about Bishop Henry Compton's exotic plant collection at Fulham Palace during the 17th century. Dr Spencer's findings helped inform new plantings schemes, including for the newly established Bishop Compton beds. Recently it has been confirmed that Compton grew belladonna lily (*Amaryllis belladonna*), coffee (*Coffea arabica*), gherkin (*Curcumis anguria*), and wild loofa (*Luffa operculata*).

Loans and partnerships

With the creation of our new museum and exhibition spaces, and the refurbishment of the historic rooms, we are now able to display objects that require controlled conditions and additional security. As the Bishops left nothing behind when they moved out, we approached several institutions about displaying material relevant to the story of Fulham Palace from their collections. The Bishop of London and Sion College have lent over 20 portraits of former Bishops of London and Kings and Queens of England, helping bring the Palace to life. The Victoria and Albert Museum have lent six chairs showcasing the style of furnishing popular when Bishop Sherlock built his grand dining room in the mid 18th century. Oxford University Herbarium has lent two drawings and four specimens of pressed plants collected from Bishop Compton's famous garden over 300 years ago, and the Natural History Museum lent seeds in packets dated from slightly later, representing how plant material was sent around the world by collectors. We are hugely grateful to all the institutions for lending us these incredible objects to share with our visitors.



Our approach to restoration

Through this restoration project we had the opportunity, for the first time, to investigate how the oldest parts of Fulham Palace were used and changed over the centuries to suit the tastes, needs and wealth of the Bishops who lived here, a hidden history we can explore with our visitors. In order to accomplish this and ensure the works that were carried out respected, protected and complimented the building's integrity, we undertook a careful and considered approach to this restoration process. Key to the project's success has been our steadfast commitment to researching the building materials and methods originally used, and engaging skilled craftspeople to recreate these.

Our approach is exemplified in the successful restoration of the Tudor courtyard brickwork, which dates to the late 15th century. Previous repairs over the last 100 years had left the brickwork in a very poor state. Before work began, the bricks and mortar were thoroughly examined and detailed restoration specifications were provided by our architect, Purcell Architects, and historic brick specialist Dr Gerard Lynch. When Sykes & Son Ltd. was appointed as the main contractor for the restoration works, we required that they use a specialist sub-contractor to undertake the brickwork repairs. SSH Conservation was selected and extensively repaired the brickwork using traditional materials and techniques. Where possible, the original Tudor bricks were reused, with spalling bricks reversed in order to retain them. Those severely decayed were replaced like-for-like using handmade bricks fired in a wood fired kiln by H G Matthews, one of the handful of UK companies still using this traditional method. Dr Lynch developed the specification for the hot-lime mortar mix based on what was originally used when the courtyard was built, and double struck pointing, heavily used in the Tudor period, was chosen as it best suited and showcased the beauty of the bricks. Overall, the end result is stunning, and well worth the time, energy and funds invested. It is expected the brickwork will be in good condition for at least the next one hundred years.

Learning

Fulham Palace is a site steeped in history, offering a powerful learning experience in a welcoming and historic environment, away from the confines of the classroom.

Schools programme

We offer a variety of hands-on sessions for Early Years, KS1 and KS2, all with links to the Early Years Framework and National Curriculum. As part of the restoration project, we reviewed this offer and expanded the schools programme by developing and delivering new sessions this year for primary and secondary schools.

Through the story of Catherine of Aragon's rumoured convalescence at Fulham Palace, the new Curing Catherine session engages students with the roles of apothecaries, physicians and surgeons in Tudor England. During a visit to the walled garden and vinery, the healing powers of different herbs are discussed before students collect their own herbs to bring back to the apothecary's workshop and make cures for Catherine.



'This is the best school trip EVER!' – year 4 student after participating in Curing Catherine session

Family fun days

This year we started our family fun days, offering visitors a chance to experience what life was like at Fulham Palace when it was a Bishop's residence. Each fun day explores a different theme, from Saxon crafts to a World War I hospital. Through working with specialist partners, including London Falconry, the Building Crafts College, and re-enactors, we are able to deliver high quality activities for a range of visitors. The first session, Tudor May Day, welcomed 1,300 visitors in one day.

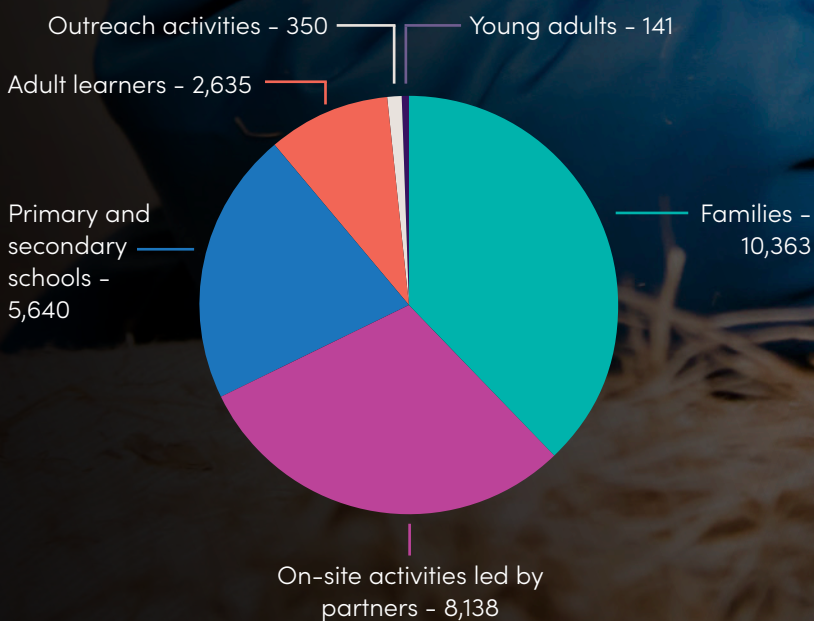
In the garden

As one of London's oldest botanic gardens, we have expanded our outdoor learning activities to share its incredible history, as well as teach modern day gardening techniques.

In addition to increasing the interpretation around the site, head gardener Lucy Hart and her team created an interactive pelargonium display in the vinery as a sensory way of engaging with visitors. The display was inspired by Bishop Compton, who grew these evergreen perennials in the garden over 300 years ago.

Our Little Green Fingers programme continues to be extremely popular. These hands-on outdoor sessions give children a chance to sow, care for and harvest their own produce and flowers, inspiring future generations of gardeners. Due to increasing demand, next year we have doubled the number of sessions to accommodate more families.

Total learners: 27,267



People

Visitors

This year we welcomed a record number of visitors to Fulham Palace – 322,867 in total, an increase of 16% on 2018/2019. The re-opening weekend alone saw over 2,590 people come to the site to take part in activities, experience the restored spaces and be inspired by imaginative interpretation. The new museum and exhibition space has been particularly well received, resulting in a 56% increase in visitors on the previous year.

Visitor satisfaction

96% of visitors rated their experience as excellent or very good

66% of visitors rated their experience as excellent

Since the re-launch of Fulham Palace in May 2019, we have received a significant amount of media coverage, helping to increase our profile through reaching a wider, more diverse audience. A feature on BBC Breakfast resulted in 13,000 website users on a single day. To further develop our online audience base, in April 2019 we launched a new website, designed to be more streamlined, informative and reflective of the on-site visitor experience. It has successfully drawn a large audience, with users navigating the site with greater ease. Our social media presence also continues to grow, with reach and engagement rates increasing throughout the year across all our platforms.

Digital media growth

- +28%** Website users
- +37%** Instagram followers
- +10%** Facebook followers
- +6%** E-newsletter subscribers
- +4%** Twitter followers

Staff

We currently employ 31 full and part-time members of staff, an increase on years past due to a restructure in 2019. The more robust staff structure provides much needed support for the increasing number of visitors we welcome and the broad range of activities we deliver. For a list of staff, visit our website: fulhampalace.org

Volunteer programme

Volunteers are involved in every aspect of Palace life, from helping to maintain and develop the garden to delivering a warm welcome to our visitors.

Volunteer support

- 20,936** Volunteer hours contributed
- 572** Volunteer positions filled
- 37** Volunteer roles

As part of the restoration, 19 new volunteer roles were created, providing numerous opportunities for the local community to get involved with the project. Their support has been crucial to its success, with volunteers contributing 23,258 hours between April 2017 and March 2020, equating to £563,412.

Volunteer satisfaction

- 95%** strongly agreed or agreed with the statement *'I enjoy the volunteering I do'*
- 93%** strongly agreed or agreed with the statement *'I would recommend Fulham Palace as a place to volunteer'*
- 88%** strongly agreed or agreed with the statement *'Volunteering at Fulham Palace gives me a sense of achievement'*

Financial report

In addition to our fundraising related activities, we generate funds through a diverse range of income streams, including venue hire, catering, retail, lettings, and public events.

Functions and catering

In November 2018, we ran a re-tendering process for the functions and café contracts, resulting in Bovingdons Ltd taking on a six-year contract in April 2019. Under their stewardship, private venue hire for weddings and functions continues to generate a significant amount of income, £1,149,505 in 2019/20. Sales in our café were £304,850. Fulham Palace receives a minimum guarantee from Bovingdons in relation to this income.

Retail

Our new shop opened in May in a dedicated space next to visitor reception. The creation of the retail manager role, a wider array of items for sale and the new location have resulted in the highest level of retail income ever generated at Fulham Palace – £33,957. This is an increase of 540% on 2018/19, though the shop was closed for the last three months of that financial year. Produce sales from our market barrow in the walled garden continue to grow as well thanks to the efforts of a team of “barrow” volunteers, raising £15,773 in 2019/20.

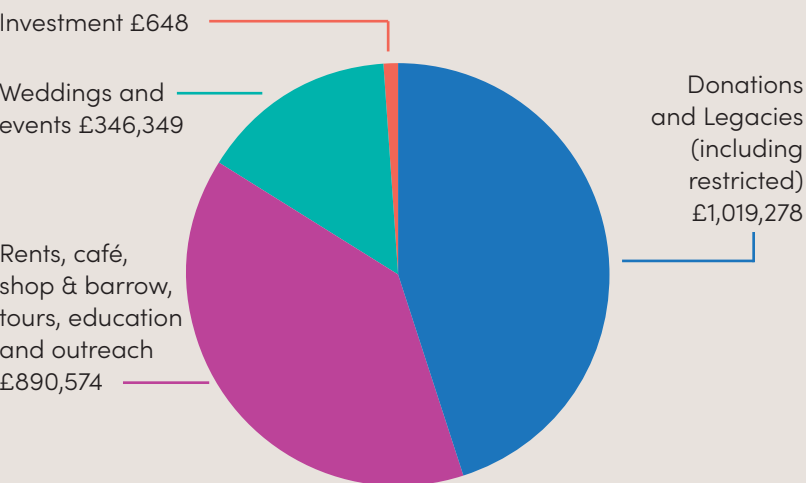
Lettings

Office and residential lettings continue to provide vital income. During the restoration, we refurbished two office spaces in the Tudor courtyard, both of which have been let. We were at full capacity for the entire year, generating £764,044, an increase of 33% from 2018/19.

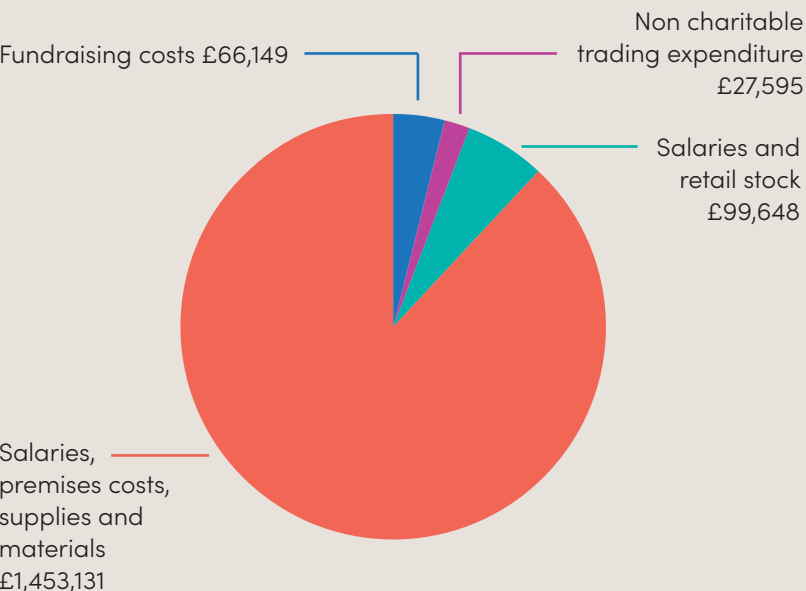
Total income and expenditure

In 2019/20, our total income was £2,256,849, a decrease of 3% from last year. Total expenditure decreased to £1,646,523, a 0.9% change from 2018/19.

Total income: £2,256,849



Total expenditure: £1,646,523



Fundraising

Thank you to all of our supporters for helping us secure the future of Fulham Palace and share it with our visitors. We could not do it without the generous grants and donations we receive from individuals, trusts and foundations and corporations.

Membership

We are very grateful for the generous support provided by our Patrons and Friends of Fulham Palace, who help fund a range of core activities at the Palace. Their buoyant membership shows how much Fulham Palace is loved. The Friends membership increased significantly this year to 335 members, up 40% from 2018/19. While the number of Patrons has dropped slightly to 65 members in 2019/20, it has remained relatively stable and we continue to have six Corporate Patrons.

National Lottery Heritage Fund

We would like to thank The National Lottery Heritage Fund and National Lottery Players for their generous support. The £2 million grant we received for our recent restoration project has helped transform Fulham Palace. Not only has the oldest part of the Palace building been extensively restored, we are now able to welcome more visitors, open more historic rooms to the public, and become more financially secure through improving our income generating activities. The project continues into the next year, with new opportunities for people to connect with the story of this important site and further improvements to the garden to reflect its rich history.

Barbara and Philip Denny Charitable Trust

This year we were awarded £16,000 from the Barbara and Philip Denny Charitable Trust for our garden apprenticeship scheme. This support contributes to our three 18-month apprenticeships in our garden, with each apprentice receiving training at Capel Manor College together with on-the-job support and training. This is the fifth year we have received support from the Trust for this programme.



'As a Patron I feel part of the history of this treasured site whilst also contributing to its future.'

Groundwork London through the Western Riverside Environmental Fund

The Western Riverside Environmental Fund (WREF) awarded us £10,000 for the creation of our natural play area. Built to encourage families to connect with nature in a fun and creative way, the new area has been a resounding success since opening in September 2019.



Grants and Donations

With thanks to our founding donors and all those who have given to Fulham Palace over the course of the year 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

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Charitable Trusts, Foundations and Organisations to Fulham Palace (£1,000+):

Association of Independent Museums
Fulham Society
Groundwork London through Western
Riverside Environmental Fund
Church Commissioners
The Barbara and Philip Denny Charitable Trust
The John Lyon's Charity

Charitable Trusts and Foundations, Organisations and Corporate Donors to the Fulham Palace Campaign 'Discovering the Bishop of London's Palace at Fulham' (£1,000+):

Alpine Works
Dyers' Company Charitable Trust
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Friends of Fulham Palace
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National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF)
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Major Donors to the Fulham Palace Campaign 'Discovering the Bishop of London's Palace at Fulham' (£1,000+):

Nunneley, Sir Charles and Lady Catherine
Spater Estate via BDB Pitmans



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