

Chester Reopening Guide – June 2020

Cheshire West and Chester Council are working with the CH1ChesterBID and other partners to make sure Chester city centre remains safe and welcoming. Here is a summary of some of the actions being taken.

Welcome to Chester

Chester will have a multi-agency team in the city centre offering guidance and reassurance. The team will be a first point of contact to help members of the public. With access to information from the CCTV cameras, practical advice will be available for information about queue lengths and where needed helping with queues and helping with social distancing. The Team will support the CH1ChesterBID City Hosts Monica and Luka whilst the city gets used to the new way of visiting and working.

Maintaining a safe and welcoming city centre is their priority.

Check the digital high-street map – www.experiencechester.co.uk/chestertogether

The CH1ChesterBID message

‘Respect. Protect. Enjoy’ refers to both outdoor spaces and within stores. The message is to be more observant, and respect others to enjoy the space

Welcome back

Great to see you

Be thoughtful (keep distance)

Maintain social distancing

Respect, Protect, Enjoy

Wash and sanitise your hands



Entry to the city

New signage is in place reminding everyone to keep two metres apart and for pedestrians to keep left and give way at narrow passing spots.



These signs are positioned on main entrances to the city centre and main streets.

Smaller signs are being used on street furniture, litter bins, finger posts etc to reinforce the safety messages.

Pedestrian friendly: roads to be closed to traffic

During the peak shopping times 10.30am to 4.30pm streets in the city centre will be pedestrian only. Pedestrians will be encouraged to keep to the left to help maintain distancing if the city centre becomes crowded.

Northgate (new pavement widening in place)

Princess Street

Frodsham Street (Kaleyards car park will be accessible to blue badge drivers and shop mobility)

Foregate street (access for taxis)

St Werburgh Street will be closed from 15 June as security bollards are installed.

Deliveries into the city remain the same, with access before 10.30am and after 4.30pm.

Access to Abbey Square is unaffected

Emergency vehicles and cyclists will still have access to the closed roads.

Pavement widening

Northgate Street has had pop-up measure to assist social distancing with the footway widening from George Street to Abbey Square.

Chester Rows

The Rows are more challenging to maintain two metre distancing. A temporary one-way system starts on 15 June. This includes signs asking to give way at the steps leading onto the Rows, direction signs and arrow signs that are being shared with shops by the CH1ChesterBID.



Street cleaning

The street cleaning teams have a different schedule at present. The very early morning cleaning isn't necessary whilst the pubs, clubs and restaurants remain closed. This means the teams will be visible during the day.

City centre streets are being deep cleaned at present using new jet washing and steam cleaning equipment and this will continue through the summer.

The new electric street-cleansing machines introduced in April are proving to be very effective, they are being used across the borough to spray disinfectant around the streets and the city centre, removing ingrained dirt from pavement surfaces.

Bins and street furniture are part of the cleaning regime but can become dirty very quickly. 25 of the Big Belly bins will be fitted with foot pedals. The Big Belly Bins inform the street cleaning teams via an App when they are full and need to be emptied.

The subways have also had deep cleaning including the removal of new graffiti.

Hand sanitisers

In addition to hand sanitisers provided at store entrances there will be supervised sanitisers at the Chester bus interchange and Chester Market entrances.

Cheshire West and Chester's Public Health advise against hand sanitiser stations in unsupervised public areas.

This is based on;

- The risk of tampering is great meaning it would be difficult to be assured that the contents were safe
- Given the requirement for 60 per cent alcohol the contents could be used for purposes other than hand hygiene (which would be incredibly dangerous)
- It is entirely possible they could become a source of infection (like various public touch screens etc.)
- The likelihood is that they would be emptied very quickly and need almost constant refilling
- Public Health advice encourages personal responsibility for hand hygiene and social distancing

The advice for visitors to the city centre is to use their own hand sanitisers and consider using face masks in confined spaces (now required for travelling on public transport). Businesses may also consider providing sanitisers at shop entrances.

Park and Ride and buses

The Government advice is to use public transport only when essential, bus services are returning but are expected to be less busy for a while yet.

Park and Ride is closed at present and being reviewed, following Government advice. We will provide an update as soon as possible.

The temporary closure of Frodsham Street will be changing the routes of some city centre buses and the temporary closure of some bus stops in Foregate street. This will also allow for more pedestrian space where queues for buses are removed.

Taxis

The 24-hour taxi rank on Foregate Street (south side) will also be relocated between a point 39 metres west of the centre line of its junction with Love Street and a point 20 metres west of the west side of Bath Street.

Car parks

Market Car Park and Trinity Street Car Park have been painted and cleaned and they have also had signage put up to remind about social distancing. Car park pay points are being cleaned during the day. One-way pedestrian routes will be used. Signs on the car park lifts recommend using lifts for going up and staircases for coming down, except for people with mobility problems who can use the lifts for both directions.

A new concessionary parking fee has been introduced at the Roodee Car Park for shop workers in the city. Contact the CH1ChesterBID for details.

Kaleyards car park remains open for blue badge holders and for people wanting to use Shopmobility.

Cycling

Whilst the roads have stayed much quieter over the past few months, there has been a welcome increase in cycling. The Council has been indicatively awarded up to £805,000 from the Emergency Active Travel Grant. The plans have been submitted to the Department of Transport. Further public consultation will continue following the 'walk, cycle, thrive' hack, led by the Good for Nothing group last week.

Public Toilets

The public toilets will remain closed until it is safe to reopen. The guidance is for toilets to be cleaned after every use which isn't possible for public toilets. Managing social distancing is also not possible at most locations. The toilets at the Bus Interchange will be available.

Security Bollards

St Werburgh Street will be closed from 15 June for installation of Security bollards (part of the city centre programme)

Your Business

The Government has produced guidelines on the re-opening of businesses to maintain social distancing, links are available from the Councils home page www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

The Government has produced guidance on managing the risk of COVID-19 and five steps for working together safely:

- Carrying out a COVID-19 risk assessment and sharing the results with the people who work in the building
- Having a cleaning, handwashing and hygiene procedure in line with guidance
- Taking all reasonable steps to help people work from home
- Taking all reasonable steps to maintain a 2m distance in the workplace
- Where people cannot be 2m apart, doing everything practical to manage transmission risk

A staff notice and a public notice are available for display.

Alfresco

Government legislation is currently that food and drink cannot be served at tables, even outside of a business premises.

But as legislation is amended, the Council will work with businesses, with a future relaxation to the Alfresco guidance to support businesses in this difficult time. Cafés, restaurants and bars can't put their tables and chairs outdoors yet, whilst they can't be used this additional space will help pedestrians returning to the city.

Managed queues

Most businesses will have to restrict the number of shoppers on the premises at one time. Managed queues have become a familiar sight, if this will be necessary for your business please talk with neighbouring businesses to agree the safest way to achieve social distancing. The use of pavement space outside the shop can be used where the road is clear of traffic. Queues can use the front of shops along the pavement and maintaining a two-metre space between the queue and pedestrians walking past on the road.

Providing a notice to show where an individual queue ends can be achieved with a window sticker.

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