

# CRAG Issues

General  
Communication  
Public Realm  
Traffic Management (including Parking)  
Homelessness & ASB  
One City Plan (To follow).

*Final – Approved – 08.12.19*

# CRAG Issues: General

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- **Requirements for all key topics.**

- CWaC Annual action plan.
- CWaC Budget.
- Name of CWaC individual responsible (councillor & officer).
- Access to CWaC progress reports and data.
- Access to other relevant data sources.
- An understanding of CW&C budget and expenditure processes.

- **General Approach.**

- Initial meetings (general and topic specific) with CWaC councillors, officers and all CRAG members present.
- Ongoing topic-specific progress / working meetings between CRAG & CWaC nominated individuals.

## **Communication**

### **What would good look like?**

- **Chester activities of all kinds publicised in one readily accessible well-advertised location in a timely manner.**
- **CWaC policies and information better sign-posted & structured.**
- **CWaC councillors and officers communicate pro-actively, regularly, consistently and effectively with Chester residents and Residents' associations.**
- **CRAG and affiliate members seen as a valuable two-way-communication channel.**
- **CRAG & affiliate members' input seen by councillors and officers as useful and constructive.**
- **Response times from councillors and officers to resident enquiries and input measured against publicised KPIs & open to “rant and rave” process.**
- **CRAG seen as an equal and informed partner alongside CWaC , The University, Racecourse, Zoo & business groups (eg BID, Growth Partnership).**

### **What are the key current problems?**

- **Chester activity information fragmented and poorly advertised.**
- **CWaC website design hard to navigate – with policies and information “buried or opaque”.**
- **Outbound councillor & officer communication and engagement patchy, variable & inconsistent.**
- **Councillor & officer response times and response quality highly variable.**

# **CRAG Issues:** *Final – Approved – 08.12.2019*

## **Communication**

- **What can CRAG do to help?**
  - Offer CRAG & affiliate organisations as an effective two-way communication channel for information dissemination and gathering.
  - Contribute best practice knowledge (public & private sector).
  - Participate in “improvement workshops”.
  - Give open & honest politically impartial feedback.
  - Reach out to and communicate effectively with CWaC & other groups.
- **What would CRAG like CWaC to do?**
  - Listen, engage and positively respond in order to bring about a step-change. improvement of benefit to all parties in a manner that is also resource efficient.

# CRAG Issues: Public Realm \*

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## What would good look like?

- Well maintained, clean streets and safe public areas
- CWaC keep CRAG fully & consistently informed about programmes of work for both cyclic and seasonal maintenance so that we can communicate with residents about the service levels & actions they should expect.
- CWaC share contractor and in-house service level agreements with CRAG so that residents can feedback on adherence and hence provide potential input to CWaC for future contract negotiation.
- CWaC welcome ideas and input via CRAG to shape & improve City maintenance within available budgets
- CWaC agree the concept of residents being community agents able to rectify simple problems and effectively using SMYLE and other similar systems to help CWaC prioritise maintenance work (RA specific or CRAG “umbrella” insurance?)
- Agree which tasks residents can do as volunteers with CW&C support.
- Who is responsible for cutting back hedges? (Council to charge if they do the work on privately owned hedges?)
- CWaC contact people & points for Public Realm clear and well publicised.
- Readily available recycling facilities (N.B. bins) for visitors & resident
  
- \* In Scope: rivers, trees, parks hedges verges and street scene (footpaths, drains, litter, refuse, graffiti, parking, road-works, signage, street furniture, etc.)
- Out of scope: highways, potholes, management of street artists, anti-social behaviour.

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## Public Realm

- What are the key current problems?
  - Overflowing bins, rubbish left uncollected, attracting rats.
  - Un-cleared drains leading to flooding. This is a problem in subways, The Groves, along Queens Park Road, Grosvenor Park lower pathway always floods after rain.
  - Steps not cleared – this is a particular problem leading down to The Groves
  - The riverside. The city side is kept in reasonable condition as the lower walkway is washed after a high tide. The other side is neglected.
  - The poor state of pavements with broken paving stones, missing cobbles, and damaged tarmac.
  - Hedges and verge cutting (are householders supposed to cut their verges?) We need clear guidance on this. Should householders be required to cut back hedges taking up too much pavement?
  - Overgrown trees – often shielding lights and impeding access
  - Leaves not collected and becoming like sludge in Autumn
  - Weed control throughout the City, particularly on the Roman Walls and Gardens, central reservations and roundabouts.
  - The majority of public waste bins do not facilitate recycling.
- What can CRAG do to help & What would CRAG like CWaC to do?
  - See “What would good look like?”

## Traffic Management (including Parking)

### What would good look like?

- **Universally good air quality (to at least National Standards).**
- **Efficient, effective, non-polluting & later and safer Park & Ride (P&R) bus services.**
- **Efficient, effective, non-polluting & later bus services.**
- **Increased train station to bus station return services.**
- **Bus stops clearly labeled & time-tabled**
- **Cheshire Oaks / Chester bus service (late running to link shops & restaurants).**
- **Adequate residents' parking properly policed (city centre & surrounding areas) (24hr residents parking?)**
- **Standardise & improve clarity of residents' parking signs (Best practice example: Abingdon).**
- **Adequate city-centre parking for workers & visitors - but balanced with air-quality concerns (better and cheaper short stay car parks to encourage shoppers back into the city?)**
- **More electric vehicle re-charging points.**
- **Clarity on usage & safety of mixed use streets.**
- **Better provision for cyclists but also effective management of cyclist / pedestrian interaction.**
- **Effective monitoring of taxis.**
- **Realistic and tougher requirements for parking spaces for new developments (N.B hotels and permitted development changes of use from commercial to residential ).**

## Traffic Management (including Parking)

- **What are the key current problems?**
  - **(Growing) air quality problems.**
  - **The perception that there is no effective overall strategic Traffic / Transport policy.**
  - **Low frequency & limited time running of Park & Ride (P&R) bus services.**
  - **Low frequency, limited time running, poor reliability and information of bus services.**
  - **Weak railway station to bus station/city centre transport links. Re-route railway station bus via Town Hall square to meet needs of visitors to Storyhouse, Cathedral and area around the Cross.**
  - **Lack of policy clarity regarding the manner in which city centre and nearby parking is designed to serve the needs of businesses, residents and visitors alongside public transport and P&R.**
  - **Pinch-points of Hoole, Grosvenor & Old Dee bridges (inability of the city centre to absorb inbound traffic and the impact of pedestrian crossings on outbound flows).**
  - **Bus fleet perceived as old and polluting.**
  - **Poor maintenance of cycle ways – potholes, overhanging trees, autumn leaves not cleared.**



## **Traffic Management (including Parking)**

- **What can CRAG do to help?**
  - **Not everything can be done at once so suggest priorities & quick wins.**
  - **Research four / five cities with successful P&R schemes and identify success factors.**
  - **Contact Historic Towns Forum for information / advice.**
  - **Photograph London bus stop signage as an example of best practice.**
  - **Suggest & join CW&C, BID, Chester Growth Partnership, WCNW Chamber & Bus Company to discuss and agree key actions.**
- **Some initial ideas:**
  - **Ways to improve P&R (shop vouchers, better signage, later running etc).**
  - **Pilot ideas on one P&R site.**
  - **Improvement pathway for bus emissions (Adblue?; hybrid: electric / CNG etc).**
  - **Improved bus stop signage & identification (electronic signs?) to improve information.**
  - **Electric charging points progressively in all car parks (including supermarkets).**
  - **Restore “Free after 3” ?**
  - **Two hour “no stay” period in the middle of the day for non-residents in resident parking?**
  - **A “London Oyster card” system and standard pricing for Chester public transport.**  
**N.B. Signage & payment systems to embrace latest available technology.**

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## Traffic Management (including Parking)

- **What would CRAG like CWaC to do?**
  - Discuss their preferences and policies with CRAG.
  - Work with CRAG (not in competition) and use CRAG as a resource.
  - Incorporate CRAG ideas & input.
- **Additional detailed point.**
- **Open the access to Frodsham St from the Hoole Road roundabout on the Ring Road. This would remove traffic from the Northgate roundabout in particular as well as George St and Gorse Stacks.**

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## Homelessness & Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- What would good look like?
  - No rough sleeping or ASB within or nearby the City Walls.
  - No instances\* within or nearby the City walls of:
    - Drug dealing, drug taking and public alcohol consumption (other than alcohol in licensed premises).
    - Licencees selling alcohol to those evidently drunk.
    - Rough sleeping or leaving equipment for rough sleeping (note York approach).
    - Begging.
  - Adequate hostel facilities for the homeless – with access to appropriate care & counselling (building on existing hostels & initiatives e.g. Hamilton House).
  - Diverted giving “care not cash” notices to provide funds towards hostels & to dissuade street begging (e.g. Shrewsbury’s “give them a chance not your change”).
  - Safe areas for those under the influence of drugs or alcohol (perhaps paid for by a levy on all licensed premises – including the Race Course).
  - Drink & drug tanks outside hospital A & E units (perhaps paid for by a levy on all licensed premises – including the Race Course?).
  - Targeted & regular campaigns to support positive progress.

\* Stepped progressive quarterly targets from today towards zero.

## Homelessness & Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- What are the key perceived current problems?
  - Increasing ASB, particularly on race days and at week-ends.
  - Increasing rough sleeping.
  - More and more rough sleeping equipment left in shop doorways.
  - Increasing drug taking & dealing (abandoned used syringes in many places).
  - Increasing begging.
  - Shortage of money for safe areas and drink & drug tanks outside hospital A & E units.
  - Patchy & variable policing and enforcement.
- What can CRAG do to help?
  - Contribute ideas to tackle the problems of homelessness and ASB.
  - Provide “eyes & ears” for police to improve detection & arrests.  
(N.B. Follow-up systems and feed-back loops must be effective).
  - Provide appropriate volunteer resource.
- What would CRAG like CWaC & Cheshire Police to do?
  - Engage positively with CRAG to work jointly to tackle these issues.
  - Share the current data so that we can understand the facts and communicate them.
  - Once the facts are shared – agree a common plan & coordinated approach to leverage collective effort.