

Code of practice

Code of practice for filming

On location in South Gloucestershire

This code is directed at all filming with the exception of ad hoc filming e.g. TV news reporting

The code is not intended to be unduly restrictive, but aims at setting out good practice, reflecting the legitimate interests and concerns of those who may be affected by filming activities

Whenever this document refers to film, the term includes all other visual media such as television, commercials, corporate and music videos, cable, satellite etc.

In certain circumstances the Council, police, other emergency services or location owners may impose additional stipulations on film-makers.

Permissions and information

For filming activity to take place, permissions need to be granted by all the relevant agencies for example the Local Authority, Police and land/property owner. Who will be involved will of course depend on the location and other relevant circumstances.

The production company also needs to ensure that all those affected by filming have been consulted and informed of arrangements (e.g. neighbouring properties). We would recommend that at least one weeks notice is given to all concerned. For particular public services the following should be followed;

The Council

The Council must be informed of all filming activity due to take place on public property (and on private property where it might impact on highways, or could cause nuisance to neighbouring properties) and be provided with details of the following:

- The name of the production company, the type of production and a contact person and telephone number
- The scale of the production in terms of numbers of personnel and vehicles
- The removal, alteration and disguising of street furniture and carriageway markings
- The use of cranes, aircraft, cherry pickers, track, low-loaders, 'A' frames and any other potentially hazardous equipment in a public place
- The parking of production vehicles on yellow lines, in meter bays or residents' bays.

- The use of special effects, rain or snow machines, wet downs and stunt work on public footways or carriageways.
- Productions which depict subjects of a controversial nature
- Filming involving children or animals
- Adequate public liability insurance and other relevant insurances

The Police

Local police should be informed of filming activity within their districts. In addition to advising the police of the points above, special guidance should be sought with the following:

- The staging of crimes, accidents or use of firearms.
- The dressing of artistes in police uniforms. (Cast should be asked to cover such uniforms in between takes).

Other emergency services

Emergency Services may need to be notified of filming activity and access for emergency vehicles must always be maintained during location filming. Where relevant the Emergency Services should be duly advised of:

- Special effects, fires or explosions (Fire Brigade)
- The impersonation of fire officers or use of pseudo fire tenders (Fire Brigade)
- The impersonation of ambulance staff or use of pseudo ambulances (Ambulance Service)

Landowners

Film-makers should ensure that location owners and adjacent property owners are:

- Kept fully informed of the intentions of the production company whether they are used for filming or not
- Issued with an approved location contract which clearly states the terms agreed between themselves and the production company
- Given details of any art department requirements including dressing and construction
- Provided with written notification, (such as a letter drop), at least seven days prior to the first day on location. If the notice is less than seven days, then a representative of the company should personally discuss their intentions with all relevant property owners.

In line with the South Gloucestershire Council's obligation to take action to protect vulnerable adults and children, it has been decided that the photographing and filming of children and vulnerable adults, on and in land and buildings owned or leased by the Council, will be permitted only when a consent form has been completed and signed in advance of the filming taking place. For children and young people under 18 the form will have to be signed by a parent or carer. This includes activities where children or vulnerable adults are not the main focus, but may be present in the background or as spectators of an activity or event.

Insurance

Proof of adequate public liability insurance and any other relevant insurances should be made available on demand to anyone reasonably affected by the filming activities. They may require a copy of the company's Public Liability Insurance document.

All filming undertaken and any associated liability is the sole responsibility of the production company, its employees and contractors.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of the production company to ensure that its employees and contractors comply with all current health and safety regulations when filming on location. Arrangement should include the following:

- All locations being assessed for risk and hazard. Where necessary a health and safety professional should be consulted and a full Risk Assessment report should be compiled and circulated to all employees, contributors and contractors.
- A person qualified in first aid should always be present during filming.
- The Council must be consulted, well in advance of filming, for advice on traffic control and any related safety measures required. For filming on the public highway, the services of a professional traffic management company will be required. Whilst working on the public highway, all members of the production team must wear approved protective clothing for example high visibility jackets.

Respect for residents and members of the public

Film-makers on location are asked to be sensitive to the community in which they are working. The Production Company should therefore address the following;

- All neighbouring residents and businesses affected by filming should be given at least seven days notice by letter of filming arrangements in their area. If the notice period is less than seven days a representative of the production company should contact, in person, any affected property owners.
- Noise should be kept to a minimum, especially during unsociable hours (normally 10 p.m. to 8 am). Generators should be baffled or integral with the location vehicle.
- Crew members should aim to dress decently at all times and in all weathers. Dress codes imposed on particular locations for religious or other reasons must be adhered to.
- Crew and cast should refrain from using lewd or offensive language.
- Access ways to homes and businesses should be kept clear at all times, unless otherwise agreed with the individuals concerned.
- Lighting and other equipment must not cause a hazard to the general public. Cables should be flown to a height of 2.6m above the footway and 5.2m above the carriageway or covered with matting when crossing pavements. Where appropriate, warning cones and hazard tape should be used.
- No danger should be caused by the dazzle of lights.
- If filming activity blocks a footway, an alternative safe route for pedestrians must be provided.
- In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to provide alternative parking arrangements for residents if parking is affected by the filming.

Observing designated areas

Film-makers' activities are limited to the areas and times for which permission has been granted. Accordingly:

- Production vehicles should be parked where agreed at pre-arranged times. Engines should be switched off on arrival. Cast and crew should not park in the immediate vicinity of a location unless spaces are provided.
- Drinks and meals should be taken in designated areas.
- No-smoking areas must be observed. Where smoking is allowed, cigarettes must be extinguished in ashtrays provided by the production company.
- Crew members must not trespass onto neighbouring property or enter areas which the owner has stipulated may not be used for filming.

Care of the location

Film-makers are guests on a location and must treat both public and private property with respect. Whilst detailed arrangements are a matter for the production company to agree with the owner, the Council would expect::

- Rubbish bins should to be made available by the production company and must be cleared regularly. It is the responsibility of the production company to ensure that all rubbish is cleared from the location immediately after filming has ceased.
- Protective materials or dust sheets to be provided where appropriate to cover furniture and flooring for interior filming.
- Objects belonging to the location must not be moved or removed without the owner's express permission.
- All signs or property removed or disguised for filming purposes must be reinstated upon completion of filming. All signs posted to direct the production company to location must be removed.
- The production company must make good any damage or mess caused by its activities immediately after filming and must notify all relevant parties. This might include adjacent public and private property that may be indirectly affected e.g. by materials used to dress the highway. For example, extraneous dust due to bad weather.
- Whenever necessary the production company must ensure that the location and its environs are protected by security staff.
- The crew member responsible for the location should check it thoroughly before departure to ensure that the property has been restored to its original state and that any evidence of filming activity has been removed unless otherwise agreed.

Reporting

The Council is currently carrying out a study of the level of filming activity in South Gloucestershire. We ask the Production Company to submit the location spend form on completion of the filming. This information will be treated in strict confidence and will be used only as a cumulative total of all filming in South Gloucestershire. This research will then be used as an economic argument for the continuing support for film making in the area and for the development of initiatives for the film and TV sector in South Gloucestershire.

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