

FILMING IN CHURCHES OR CHURCHYARDS

From time-to-time, film or TV companies ask to film in church property. This can be a useful promotional opportunity for the church but also can be a useful source of income. All filming activity should be covered by a suitable licence granted by the Representative Body; this licence will contain the necessary safeguards for the Church in connection with the filming. Film or TV companies will invariably contact the local church first to enquire about filming use. It is vital that the local church is fully aware and supportive of the proposed use but also that nothing is negotiated or signed without the agreement of the Representative Body as owner.

The Representative Body handles numerous filming agreements each year and has knowledge of appropriate conditions and terms including fees. Accordingly, any film or TV company wishing to film in a church or churchyard should be advised to contact the Representative Body immediately so that terms for a location agreement, including a fee, can be agreed. Authority for filming is granted by the Representative Body and its Property Committee has authorised the Property Department to sign an appropriate agreement with the company.

The company should provide details of the production with particular detail of the scene at the property concerned. A transcript for the scene should also be provided. The nature of the programme and the context in which the church is to be portrayed should be considered carefully and any doubts should be discussed with the Archdeacon.

The location agreement will require the company to provide indemnity insurance, including cover for consequential loss and the PCC should consider any items within the church for which special precautions may be needed to be taken. The church insurers should be advised that the church is to be used for filming.

The company must indicate whether any furniture is to be moved as this may have faculty implications. Any queries as to whether any proposal may involve a faculty should be clarified with the Diocesan Registrar.

The company should provide details of any props it intends to use. Additionally, it should be established whether any facilities will be required e.g. electricity, water, etc. In cases where there are large props or tracking is to be laid for cameras, the company should be advised that a schedule of condition will be required, the cost of which will have to be borne by the company.

Licence fees for filming in churches or churchyards fall within the Church Sales Regulations and, where the fee is below £7,500, will be payable to the PCC. Distribution of fees above that level is at the discretion of the Property Committee.

The company should be told that at least two-weeks' notice of filming should be provided. Any shorter period of notice may mean that there will be insufficient time for the necessary consultations to be made and for the Representative Body's authority to be obtained.

Provision is made in the location agreement for a parish representative to be present during filming and to object to anything not agreed beforehand. This could be difficult for longer filming sessions but the option should be taken up where possible. It may be appropriate for the duration of filming to be divided into sessions so that representatives can take it in turns.

Anyone wishing to enquire about filming in churches or churchyards should contact the Property Department of the Church in Wales at:

Tel No: 029 2034 8200

Email: property@churchinwales.org.uk.

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Head of Property Services

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