



Filming in Churches and churchyards

Churches are popular film locations and Sussex is a big attraction to film location companies.

Although you can register your church building with a film location company, many of our parishes get called up out of the blue with filming requests.

Careful planning is essential. You may need to seek permission from your Archdeacon at an early stage. You will be required to provide information about the contract, fee, insurance and local agreement for the filming.

The following guidelines are to assist incumbents, PCCs and churchwardens in the Diocese of Chichester to decide whether to agree to a filming request.

Points to consider when responding to filming requests:

Is it appropriate?

Ask whether the filming is for drama, feature film, news programme, documentary, etc. Request a synopsis will give you an overview of the finished programme and allow you to determine if its in keeping with a place of Christian worship or contradictory, or otherwise prejudicial or whether or not it is harmful to the Church. If filming is likely to be lengthy with a lot of action in the church, you may also want to see the actual scripts.

Time

Ask how long the church is required for. Broadly speaking, a news item where the subject is a Church of England matter and the editor simply wants to use the church as background would not take more than half an hour. However, a feature film or drama will need to light and possibly rig the church before filming could start and it could need de-rigging. The word 'day' is often used. You should be clear about what constitutes a day, so you can charge if the company overruns its time.

Facilities

Does the production company need to use other facilities such as the Hall or car park? If filming is likely to be lengthy or for drama, you need to discuss toilet facilities, dressing room areas etc. Use of your hall or car park for such things can be used as bargaining tools when you negotiate the fee. Do ask the production company what they have organised for parking. If it is on a street with restrictions, they will need to have gained local authority traffic department approval.

Supervision

It is advisable to ensure someone is present during the filming. If it is a day-long shoot, or longer, two people may be needed. They need to know what agreements you have made with those filming.

Layout

What changes are proposed to the way the church is laid-out? If fixed items need to be moved, you are likely to need a faculty. If in doubt, please contact the DAC.

Documentary makers often wish to film a service, for example, a baptism or marriage, for a package they are putting together. In the case of such services you will need the permission of those involved. A film crew will often offer copies of the film in lieu of a fee for the couple. Under those circumstances you are still entitled to a fee.

For any service you need to agree what is to be filmed and where the cameras will be positioned so that the congregation is not distracted.

Insurance

You must ensure the PCC is insured against damage or accident. Your own insurance policy may not cover you. If you are looking at a substantial amount of filming, it would be prudent to ask the Diocesan Registrar to look over the contract. Do carry out your own risk assessment and ensure all fire regulations are adequate and up to date.

Contract

It is advisable to draw up a contract – it does not need to be lengthy, however it is advisable to ask the diocesan registrar to look over the contract especially if there are copyright matters. The contracting party for the church should be the PCC.

Fees

Time and type of programme are the two main factors determining a location fee. A scale of minimum daily fees to negotiate with (starting with the lowest) are:

- News piece to camera (PTC) - Free
- Documentary PTC - £ 300 per day (usually per hour)
- Documentary Drama Reconstruction - £ 600 per day
- Daytime Drama - £ 750 per day
- High-End Drama - £ 850 per day
- UK Feature & Photography - £ 900 per day
- Co-Production Feature - £ 1,000 per day
- Tri-Production Feature - £ 1,250 per day

Recommended film location companies:

[Creative England](#)

[Location Partnership](#)

[Film Locations](#)

[Heritage4Media](#)