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Below are some guidelines I would advise you follow if you are approached by a company wanting to film in or around your church. I am happy to advise if you are unsure on what decision to make. It would also be appreciated if you contacted me so I am aware of what's happening!

Category

Ask whether the filming is for drama, feature film, news programme, documentary, soap opera, sitcom or advertisement? Apart from the fact that the scale of fees you charge will be determined to some extent by the category, the potential for damaging or insensitive material will also vary across the genres.

Story

Ask for a synopsis of the story. This will give you an overview of the finished programme and allow you to judge 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 for a feature film or drama the church might need to lit and possibly rigged before filming could start and de-rigged at the end. 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 discuss loo 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.

Church Services

News or 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 obviously, 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 insist that the PCC is indemnified and 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.

Fees

Time and type of programme are the two main factors determining a location fee. Drama has the largest budgets. You should aim for around £800-1500 a day for drama.

With documentaries or current affairs, budgets are much smaller and the time involved is likely to be comparatively short, a matter of hours. Try for £50-£100 an hour.

Where news is concerned and all that is required is to use the church as background, the time is usually short and a fee would not normally be offered. It does much for goodwill and the quid pro quo is that the parish church frequently gets onto the news in a positive way.