

Location fees

When a production company films on location, they should expect to pay the property owner/representative a hire fee.

This fee is negotiable and is dependent on various criteria, usually including the below:

The type of production and its budget

Generally short films, online content and documentaries have lower budgets. Commercials, TV dramas, and feature films have larger budgets with more spent on locations. The production company will have a set budget for locations and if they are unable to come to an agreement with a property holder, they will go elsewhere.

The type of property

If your property is particularly unusual you can expect a higher fee. The production company will deal directly with you to negotiate this fee, although we can offer guidance.

How disruptive filming will be and how long filming will take

All filming is disruptive, but it's best to try and get an accurate idea of just how disruptive before you sign any contracts or agree a fee. Wait until the production company has decided exactly what they want to do and how long filming will take before negotiating fees. Go round your property with the location manager and ensure that you are both clear about which areas will be used, what for, and how long they will be required.

They may also require the use of areas for makeup, green room, office space, parking, dining – not just filming space.

Check if they plan to use your utilities, e.g. electricity and also toilets.

If they are planning to make changes to the interior or exterior of your home e.g. decorating consider whether you want the original look reinstating, or redecorating or whether you are happy to keep the changes they make.

Make sure this information is in the contract. The time required to prepare for the shoot and to return the location to its original condition are usually paid as well, but at a lower daily rate.

You may want to consider what the production's storyline is and where your property fits into this. You should also ensure that you, or a representative, is with the production company during filming in case any problems arise.

Other factors to consider

If anything changes after you've come to an agreement, don't be afraid to ask for more money. You may wish to ask for a deposit if cancellations will cause you difficulties. The production company will ask you to sign a contract with them and this should be carefully considered before signing. Ask to see their Public Liability Insurance which should be at least £5 million, (PLI) before signing and ensure that they will return your property to its original state after filming (if that is what you have agreed). You should also notify your own insurance company.

Ranges of fees

A private home can expect anything from £200 to £1,000 per day. The National Trust suggests their properties charge £100 per hour for documentaries and up to £8,000 per day for a high budget feature film. The key is to negotiate and seriously consider the filming request and what it's worth to you. Properties that are open to visitors often consider the publicity they gain from featuring in a film or television programme as part payment of fees.

North East Screen is always happy to advise on filming at any property. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of help filming@northeastscreen.org