

Culture and Communities Committee

10:00am, Thursday, 7 December 2023

Edinburgh Film Charter Update

Executive/Routine
Wards

Routine
All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to approve the updated Edinburgh Council Film Charter.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Rosie Ellison, Senior Film Officer

E-mail: rosie.ellison@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 529 6273

Edinburgh Film Charter Update

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The report seeks approval of the updated Edinburgh Film Charter (Appendix 1).

3. Background

3.1 The Council has had a Film Charter and Code of Practice for Filming since 1999. These were reissued in 2008 and again in 2014, with a further update to the Code of Practice approved by the Council in 2019.

3.2 The Council's policy for the [Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming](#) was approved by Committee in October 2023. This included an updated Code of Practice for Filming which details procedures for filmmakers wishing to film in the city.

3.3 The Film Charter is a statement of support for filming in Edinburgh and demonstrates the city's film-friendly credentials. It is aligned with the Code of Practice for Filming, capturing the Council's commitment to, and procedures for, the facilitation of filming that observes the Code of Practice.

4. Main report

4.1 The updates proposed align with other Council procedures which have recently been agreed. The updates are:

4.1.1 To recognise that the city's Film Office, Film Edinburgh, has been a Council service since 2020;

4.1.2 That Police Scotland will provide guidance for filming involving the staging of crimes, accidents or where the use of weapons is intended, but that it is now the responsibility of the production company to implement traffic management in line with procedures agreed with the Council; and

4.1.3 The review of scripts will be for the purpose of coordination and assistance but not for content approval except where a law is being violated, where the production could bring the Council and its ALEOs into disrepute and where filming includes Social Work residential day units and fieldwork offices

containing confidential information, and locations where there is a judicial process. No production which may bring the Council or ALEOs into disrepute shall be permitted to use Council or ALEO locations.

4.2 The Charter reiterates information about charges for Council services and locations:

4.2.1 Confirmation that fees for the use of Council property as filming locations will be charged in line with the UK market for film work and will reflect disruption and dedicated personnel time; and

4.2.2 Confirmation that fees for the use of Council services will include cost recovery and will be in line with published service charges.

5. Next Steps

5.1 The Film Charter will be replaced on Council websites and in communications with filmmakers.

6. Financial impact

6.1 As noted in the [Filming in Edinburgh 2022](#) report, the direct spend from filming in the City of Edinburgh in 2022 was £22.6 million, of which £164,005 was income for the City of Edinburgh Council. It is projected that this will grow with local film studio provision, increasing numbers of local crew, film-friendly locations, and the Council support outlined in the Film Charter, creating demand for the city as a filming destination.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

7.1 The integrated impact assessment checklist supporting the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming is attached as Appendix 2. The Film Charter is aligned to this.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and

“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

Environmental Impacts

- 8.3 The Edinburgh Film Charter aligns with the policy for the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming and through which it is anticipated that we will see improvements on the sustainability methods used for activities within the City.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 In updating the Film Charter, Film Edinburgh consulted Police Scotland to ensure accuracy, and engaged with local authority film offices around Scotland and the UK to benchmark.
- 9.2 The Charter is aligned with the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Code of Practice for Filming in Edinburgh](#)
- 10.2 [Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming](#)
- 10.3 For reference, the previous iteration of the [Edinburgh Film Charter](#)

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 The Edinburgh Film Charter 2023.

Appendix 2 Integrated Impact Assessment checklist supporting the Use of Public Spaces for Events and Filming

FILM CHARTER

for The City of Edinburgh Council
October 2023



Contents

Contents	1
Foreword	2
Introduction	3
Coordination and communication	3
Parking, traffic management and exterior filming	4
2.1 The facilitation of exterior filming	4
2.2. Pre-production meetings	4
2.3 Police Scotland	4
Fees and Indemnities	6
3.1 Use of Council property as locations	6
3.2 Council policy regarding fees for use of Council services.	6
3.3 Quotations	6
3.4 Public Liability Insurance	6
3.5 Code of Practice for Filming	6
3.6 Film content	6

Foreword

It is a source of real pride that Edinburgh attracts high profile film and TV productions that project our city onto screens around the UK and the world. In the last few years alone, Edinburgh has been the backdrop for films and high-end TV drama such as *Avengers: Infinity War* and *Outlander*, and it is fantastic to see visitors in Edinburgh who have been captivated by films and literature set in or inspired by our city.

We welcome filming not only for the on-screen promotion and tourism benefits but also for the direct economic impact from filming, and the employment and commercial opportunities it brings to our city's creative industries, local businesses and residents.

Our positive reputation as a filming destination is supported by both our Film Charter and our Code of Practice for Filming which sets out guidelines for successful filming within our community, ensuring the continuation of the city's film-friendly credentials.

The interest in our beautiful capital city as a filming location looks set to grow and we look forward to working with many more exciting productions over the coming months and years.



Councillor Val Walker

Convenor of the City of Edinburgh Council's Culture and Communities Committee

Introduction

The City of Edinburgh Council is committed to facilitating services to the film and television industries.

Their commitment is sealed by their adoption of this charter.

Coordination and communication

All initial contact by commercial film, television and commercials productions should be made directly with Film Edinburgh, The City of Edinburgh Council's film office. Film Edinburgh's remit is to market the City of Edinburgh (and the neighbouring local authorities of East Lothian and the Scottish Borders) as a filming location, to facilitate the production process and to monitor the economic impact of filming therefrom. If contacted directly, Council services, ALEOs and contracted service providers should enquire if the production has registered with Film Edinburgh and, if necessary, assist the production to do so. Film Edinburgh will establish necessary links with production personnel, analyse the film script and shooting schedule, and will determine in conjunction with production personnel which departments and agencies are likely to be impacted by the production.

Large-scale filming will result in additional work for Council personnel. However, in association with Film Edinburgh, Council services will develop procedures and paperwork to minimise this impact on their workload. Each Council service will have a nominated liaison person with provision being made for an alternate staff member to handle these duties when the designated liaison is on leave or otherwise unavailable. Procedural continuity and mutual understanding between Film Edinburgh and filmmakers will result in clear guidelines and channels to achieve necessary requirements for all involved parties. All services and officials are expected to be as cooperative as possible in dealing with filmmakers' requests.

Parking, traffic management and exterior filming

2.1 The facilitation of exterior filming

The facilitation of exterior filming and its requirement for traffic management and unit parking is the major area of interaction between public services and filmmakers. Inter-service and agency cooperation are already part of the infrastructure of the City and the same level of cooperation will be applied to requests from filmmakers. Relevant Council services and, where appropriate, ALEOs and contracted service providers will be provided with information from the production company regarding all aspects of exterior filming within their jurisdiction and will work together in facilitating filmmaking, and Road Services will notify all Emergency Services and public utilities of all significant filming on the streets of Edinburgh. In addition, Police Scotland liaison will provide guidance with respect to the staging of crimes, accidents or use of firearms.

The City of Edinburgh Council understands that production companies will have different levels of requirements with full and final details often only being available after the filmmaker's technical reconnaissance. Production companies will be advised at every stage by Film Edinburgh about

feasibility of requests, permits (if required) and deadlines.

Every effort will be made to facilitate filmmakers' requests under the statutory requirements of the appropriate health and safety and road traffic regulations.

2.2. Pre-production meetings

In circumstances where the level of filming activity will have a significant impact on the general public or on departmental activity, Film Edinburgh will arrange a pre-production meeting involving key personnel from the production company and the appropriate service liaison officers. The purpose of the meeting will be to advise on and coordinate filmmakers' requests, agree a schedule that can be serviced by all parties, and prepare contingencies for potential schedule changes. Emergency services will be involved where street closures are planned, Police Scotland where the staging of crimes, accidents or use of weapons are intended, and Fire Scotland where use of fire hydrants, special effects, fires or pyrotechnics are planned.

2.3 Police Scotland

Where Police Scotland deems it necessary for there to be a Police presence for public safety purposes, filmmakers will be advised to apply for Police services. Police Scotland will charge a fee to the Production Company for these resources.



Fast 9 filming Waterloo Place 2019, © Film Edinburgh

Fees and Indemnities

The Council is obliged to realise 'best value' on returns from property rental and services. In recognition of the high value of the economic benefit brought into the area on a wider scale by film work, fees for use of council property and services will be charged within the UK market norms for film work.

3.1 Use of Council property as locations

Use of Council property as a film location will be facilitated by Council services wherever feasible; security, confidentiality, daily work requirements and schedules allowing. Location fees will reflect disruption and dedicated personnel time and will be negotiable. Film Edinburgh will provide ongoing advice on fees.

3.2 Council policy regarding fees for use of Council services.

The Council will charge production companies for materials, permits and dedicated personnel's time where required. These charges will reflect recoupment of costs and will be line with published service charges.

3.3 Quotations

An estimate giving details of all such charges will be presented to the production company in advance of filming. Contingency should be made

by both parties to allow for additional requests and changes by the production company. Cost breakdown estimates will be updated as soon as such information is received and copied to the production company. Once filming is complete, a full and detailed account should be issued to the production company for payment.

3.4 Public Liability Insurance

Production Companies will be required by the City of Edinburgh Council to carry Public Liability Insurance with an adequate limit of indemnity (no less than £10 million) and all other insurances required by law. Any filming undertaken and associated liability there from is the sole responsibility of the production company and its employees.

3.5 Code of Practice for Filming

Each production which requests to film in the City of Edinburgh will be obliged to abide by the city's *Code of Practice for Filming*. The Production Company and its employees will be required to work in a courteous and responsible manner in dealing with Edinburgh's citizens, businesses and Council. Each service liaison person should be familiar with the Code of Practice and inform Film Edinburgh of any violations.

3.6 Film content

The Council shall not permit or otherwise the use of public facilities based on approval of the script, except where a law is being violated, where the production could bring the Council or ALEO into disrepute, and in exceptional circumstances. Specifically included in the exceptions are Social Work residential day units and fieldwork offices containing confidential information, and Council or ALEO locations where there is a judicial process. The review of scripts by Council or ALEO officials will be for the purposes of production coordination and assistance. Film Edinburgh will give assistance to any official seeking guidance on this matter. No production which may bring the Council or ALEOs into disrepute shall be permitted to use Council or ALEO locations.

Integrated Impact Assessment Checklist

This checklist should be used to structure the group discussion and will inform the final IIA. The boxes may also help you to write your ideas down before discussion within the group. For further support read the *Supporting Information*.

1. **Before going through the checklist, consider:**
 - **What do you think will change as a result of this proposal?**
2. **Now consider impacts on different populations**
 - **Which groups will be affected?**
 - **Go through the checklist below to identify how different people could be affected differentially, and possible areas of impact.**

Population Groups	Differential impacts (<i>how may each group be affected in different ways?</i>)
<p>People with protected characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people and people in their middle years • Young people and children • Men (include trans men), Women (include trans women) and non-binary people. (Include issues relating to pregnancy and maternity including same sex parents) • Disabled people (includes physical disability, learning disability, sensory loss, long-term medical conditions, mental health problems) • Minority ethnic people (includes Gypsy/Travellers, migrant workers, non-English speakers) • Refugees and asylum seekers • People with different religions or beliefs (includes people with no religion or belief) • Lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual people • People who are unmarried, married or in a civil partnership 	<p>Public spaces are a shared resource with the whole population able to use the parks and streetscape for their daily business. The temporary change in the use of space will affect all persons the same.</p> <p>This policy will provide proportionality to the mixed use of public space and guide those organising events to ensure that they comply with legislation, including the Equalities Act. Including information on providing welfare facilities for all, accessibility, and a myriad of subjects. This policy offers tactical guidance and ensures all events meet the guidelines.</p> <p>This policy intends to provide accountability to those who use public spaces for events and filming and the ability to refuse those who do not adhere to reasonable guidance to minimise impacts.</p>

Population Groups	Differential impacts (<i>how may each group be affected in different ways?</i>)
<p>Those vulnerable to falling into poverty, eg have low or no wealth, on low income, live in areas of deprivation, experiencing material deprivation (socio-economic disadvantage)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • People in receipt of benefits • Lone parents • Vulnerable families, e.g. young mothers, people experiencing domestic abuse, children at risk of statutory measures, including disabled adult/children, minority ethnic families • Families with a child under 1 • Larger Families (3+ children) • People in receipt of pensions • Care for experienced children and young people • Those leaving care settings (including children and young people and those with illness) • People experiencing homelessness • Carers (including young carers and carers with protected characteristics) • Those involved in the criminal justice system • People with low literacy/numeracy • People experiencing difficulties with substance use • Others, e.g. veterans and students 	<p>This policy includes a statement about the positive impact that operators would need to bring to the area, including community benefits. These benefits can range from accessible pricing structures to job training opportunities. At the same time, every event is different; this policy supports those on low incomes and enhances the local community.</p>

Population Groups	Differential impacts (<i>how may each group be affected in different ways?</i>)
<p>Geographical communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural/semi-rural communities • Urban communities • Coastal communities • Business community 	<p>This policy will provide transparency on the decisions made about hosting events and other activities in their communities. They can plan their actions by providing up-to-date and accurate information on activities in their area. This policy will encourage engagement with local communities, including businesses, noting the economic impact of hosting events on the city.</p>
<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time • Part-time • Shift workers • Staff with protected characteristics • Staff vulnerable to falling into poverty 	<p>The impact of having a concise policy that staff can refer to intends to alleviate pressure and stress on individuals by having a policy statement and escalation process on which decisions can be based. Staff should not feel their decision is personal or reliant on an individual.</p> <p>This policy will affect all staff equally.</p>

3. Consider how your proposal will impact each of the following from an equalities and human rights perspective.

Objectives Equality and Human Rights	Positive/negative impacts
Eliminate discrimination and harassment.	The guidance on safety and welfare to all activities using public spaces will provide industry-specific relatable information about how to eliminate discrimination and harassment. It allows for a formal escalation process if any reports of unfair practice occur.
Advance equality of opportunity, e.g. improve access / quality of services / digital access.	The advancement of equal opportunity is managed through the policy statement of the activities needing proportionate action. It provides officers with a criterion that can be tied to industry guides.

Foster good relations within and between people who share protected characteristics	The event industry sector is about creating shared experiences, ensuring that all activities have done everything reasonable to ensure no one is excluded, and allowing those who wish to have the opportunity to foster new relationships.
Enable people to have more control of their social/work environment	This policy aims to provide transparency in the process of events and other activities using public spaces. The policy will enshrine the community engagement process, with the public being able to gain direct answers from organisers and escalate if they disagree. By providing this route for all, the public will have more control over the public environment.
Reduce differences in status between different groups of people	This policy will reduce the differences in status between different groups of people by having one access point to apply without prejudice or existing contacts. Those attending the activities will benefit from the framework guidance of community benefits.
Promote participation, inclusion, dignity and control over decisions	This policy reinforces the transparent nature of decision-making and promotes direct contact with organisers for inclusion in decisions and an escalation route if further consideration is required.
Build family support networks, resilience and community capacity	This policy is not expected to impact family support networks.
Reduce crime and fear of crime including hate crime	By instilling industry best practices for events for the use of public spaces, the council is reinforcing working with partner agencies to ensure suitable crime prevention measures are taken.
Protect vulnerable children and adults	Promoting best practices in the welfare and protection of vulnerable people is included in the event guidance at a tactical level; this high-level policy statement will ensure that those using public spaces are held to this standard.
Promote healthier lifestyles including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diet and nutrition, • sexual health, • difficulties with substance use • physical activity • life skills • wellbeing and mental health 	This policy does not directly impact healthier lifestyles. Still, indirectly, the well-being of citizens attending properly run cultural events will be promoted, along with an active travel policy to access the locations.

Environmental - consider how your proposal will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, plan for and adapt to the impacts of climate change and incorporate the principles of sustainability on each of the following.

Consideration needs to be given to the specific type and nature of impact in the following areas, for example, in relation to the energy sources and construction materials used.

Objectives - Environmental	Positive/negative impacts
<p>Address/respond to the climate crisis and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving fuel or energy efficiency • reducing the need to travel • switching to low-carbon energy sources • reducing the need for heating or lighting 	<p>This policy will highlight the best practices for using public spaces, highlighting suitable sites with permanent facilities such as power connections and reduce the reliance on and transportation of temporary structures, where appropriate environmental industry standards can be applied.</p>
<p>Plan for and adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change (surface water flooding, sea level rise, hotter and drier summers, milder and wetter winters) by eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments • use of greenspace and nature based solutions • reducing urban creep through greening and permeable surfacing • building standards to cool and storm proof buildings 	<p>Due to the temporary nature of the activities this policy will cover, this topic has no impact.</p>
<p>Increase local renewable energy generation</p>	<p>The policy will provide a strategic vision for using best industry practices, including temporary renewables, where appropriate guidance allows.</p>
<p>Protect and enhance biodiversity</p>	<p>This policy states that organisers are to minimise their impact, which relates directly to protecting the areas they use.</p>
<p>Reduce pollution: air/ water/ soil/ noise</p>	<p>This policy states that organisers are to minimise their impact directly related to the surrounding areas' pollution through management and technical advances.</p>
<p>Encourage resource efficiency (energy, water, materials and minerals) by eg:</p>	<p>Best practice industry guidance highlights efficiencies such as limiting single-use plastics and</p>

Objectives - Environmental	Positive/negative impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using less material (more compact design) • promoting material reuse • procuring goods manufactured from recycled materials content • selecting local products to minimise transport emissions • using low-carbon construction materials (cement substitutes such as PFA or GGBS, sustainably sourced timber)¹ • selecting low maintenance and durable products/materials avoiding single use plastic 	<p>allowing the public to use centralised systems such as plumbing. The policy provided the council with a statement in which those not seen to be achieving this aim can have their use in the public realm refused.</p>
<p>Change in land use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid converting wildland or greenfield to developed land, by reusing redundant buildings or repurposing brownfield sites or derelict urban land • maximise greenspaces and tree planting where possible 	<p>The temporary use activist that this policy covers means there will be no impact on the change in land use.</p>
<p>Enhance public safety eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • infection control • accidental injury • fire risk 	<p>This policy has solid provisions for public safety; if those arranging events do not follow the guidance at a tactical and operation level, they will fail on policy statements of being proportionate, having a positive effect, and minimising impact. Those combined failures mean that there is a lack of accountability, and with such a distinct breach, the use of the public space would be against this policy.</p>
<p>Protect water sources</p>	<p>This policy has a statement to minimise impact and speaks directly to protecting water sources.</p>
<p>Reduce need to travel and promote sustainable forms of transport</p>	<p>The use of public spaces for events and filming policy is to support all organisers, including local events. Promoting local uses of spaces will reduce the need to travel and significant cooperation with public transport providers to ensure sustainable transport is enhanced.</p>

¹ [More information on reducing embodied carbon in construction projects](#)

Objectives - Environmental	Positive/negative impacts
Improve the physical environment eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing quality • public space • access to and quality of green space 	The impact of this policy to provide a balance in the access to public spaces beside having attraction and activity in the public space. There is intended to be a positive impact by providing transparency and accountability to the activities.

Economic – consider how your proposal will impact on each of the following

Objectives - Economic	Positive/negative impacts
Improve quality of and access to services including digital infrastructure	The policy includes a statement about transparency in the process, providing all applications a single point for accessing the service. The implantation is hoped to be a section of the website to allow for accessibility to be built in and any automation to make the workflow more efficient and improve quality.
Cost of living, including food and fuel	This policy is not expected to impact the cost of living.
Support local business	Public spaces for events and filming can, directly and indirectly, support local businesses, from the staff required to carry out the activity to accommodation for temporary staff, catering, and suppliers; the economic demand on local providers and services is substantial.
Income from employment, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve local employment opportunities • Help young people into positive destinations • Help people to access jobs (both paid and unpaid) • Improve working conditions, including equal pay • Improve literacy and numeracy 	This policy includes a statement that the use of public spaces should have a positive effect on the community. The benefits guidance will ensure to help for all.
Income from Social Security/Benefits in kind, eg: Maximise income and/or reduce income inequality	This policy is not expect to impact income form Social Security or Benefits in kind.

4. As a group agree:

- **A summary of the impacts identified**

The impacts identified are positive with the policy intentions to make the process and activities more accountable and accessible. The majority of the impact is providing policy statements to ensure that best industry practices are followed and there is a clear recourse if the activities fall short. There should be reduced staff stress as officers will have the backing of the policy rather than personal decisions.

- **Is further evidence needed to understand these impacts and make any recommendations? If so complete an interim report and agree a timescale to complete a final report.**

- **What recommended actions should you make to mitigate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts?**

This checklist has now been completed and the findings provide the basis for completed the ***Summary Report Template*** (Section 4 Guidance document).