

Filming Guidelines

Bolton Film Office welcomes filming of all types to Bolton and recognises the benefits and attention this brings. Whilst Bolton actively encourages filming, the purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that any filming activity occurs in line with the duty of care towards its residents and businesses, which in turn supports the long-term sustainability of filming in Bolton.

These guidelines, also known as a Code of Practice (“the Code”) is a voluntary agreement and is intended as a guide for responsible filming on the highway and other public places, and aims to ensure that:

- All involved in location filming act responsibly, professionally and considerately at all times;
- Notice requirements are provided in a timely manner and adhered to in relation to regulatory and statutory matters;
- The economic, employment and cultural benefits of filming in Bolton are maximised;
- The practical impact of filming on people, businesses, and the environment within Bolton is minimised;

The guidelines apply to all forms of filming activity* on location in public places in Bolton which will likely, or have the potential to cause disruption to normal activity. [*Filming Activity refers to feature films, television productions, commercials, music promo, corporate films, news, student films, commercial stills photography, online and social media recordings, and all media known now or in the future.]

Bolton Council has a duty of care towards its residents and businesses and will exercise control if a production is failing to adhere to the guidelines and/or causing an unreasonable nuisance.

No filming or photography shall take place until all the relevant parties have granted permission. It is the Production’s responsibility to ensure that all those affected by filming have been consulted and informed of the arrangements put in place to reduce the impact of filming.

A suitable Risk Assessment must be completed and shared with Bolton Council, along with evidence of the appropriate public liability insurance (no less than £10m).

Disclaimer

Any filming undertaken within the borough of Bolton is the sole responsibility of the Producer/Production Company and its employees. Bolton Council will accept no liability for loss, financial or otherwise, alleged to have incurred as a result of these guidelines. While this document is intended to be as comprehensive as possible, it is for guidance purposes only and not exhaustive, and you should always consult and discuss your requirements/procedures with Bolton Film Office. You will indemnify Bolton Film Office and Bolton Council against any damage which may be caused on council managed land by the negligent act or omission of the Production, your agents, employees or guests.

This document will be reviewed annually.

A-Z Guidelines

Cabling

No cables shall be run over the public highway which will cause a hazard to the general public, residents, or businesses.

Any cable runs across the public highway must be agreed by the Bolton Film Office and the Bolton Council highways department, and intentions must be clearly set out in the application form.

Cables runs must be made safe at the time of laying and not at a later time/date.

Camera Track

All details relating to tracking and filming equipment must be discussed with Bolton Film Office with plenty of notice. Any obstructions on the public highway or alternative footways must be noted in the application form and cleared by the Bolton Film Office and the Bolton Council Highways department.

Any filming equipment in the road must be discussed with Bolton Film Office in order to liaise the necessary departments and obtain the required permission. Roads must not be blocked beyond the minimum width required to maintain traffic flow, and in some instances, traffic management assistance may be required. The minimum widths to be maintained are 3.5m on a one-way street and 7m on a road with two way traffic flow.

The Production Company should ensure that pedestrians, and in particular wheelchair users, are not impeded by filming. The safe minimum width of 1.5m must be provided to maintain the public's right of way on footways. It is not acceptable to force pedestrians to cross over or walk in the road (unless an alternative walkway is provided in line with Chapter 8 of the Highways Act).

Child Licences

If you are planning to include child performers in your production, you may be required to apply for a Child Employment Licence.

Best practice is to employ a registered chaperone to ensure the safety, comfort, and welfare of the child is taken care of.

Cones

The productions own placement of cones have no legal force to secure parking and their use must be agreed in advance with Bolton Film Office and any other relevant party. See parking and road closures for further information about legally enforces cones.

Council Property

The use of Bolton Council property as a film location will be facilitated by the Bolton Film Office subject to sufficient notice, advance approval and receipt of a signed license agreement. Please contact Bolton Film Office for details of available properties available for filming.

A location fee will be charged to reflect the level of disruption, staff time and any additional costs incurred as a result of the filming activity on site which will be invoiced to the Production by Bolton Council.

Any damage caused by a production will be re-charged to the production company by Bolton Council.

Cranes/Cherry Pickers/Jibs/Scissors Lifts

Sufficient notices must be given to Bolton Film Office when planning to use cranes/cherry pickers/jibs or scissor lifts, so that the appropriate permissions can be arranged.

Rigging/de-rigging must be carried out at times that will not cause any unreasonable noise, nuisance or disruption to the public.

Designated Areas

Activities carried out by productions are limited to the areas, dates, and times in which permission has been granted.

Production vehicles should be parked in designated, publicly available parking areas, or in designated parking areas agreed by Bolton Council. Engines should be switched off on arrival.

No smoking areas must be observed, which includes the use of vapes and electronic cigarettes. Where smoking is permitted, cigarettes must be extinguished and disposed of in smoking bins provided by the production.

Crew members and/or cast must not trespass onto neighbouring property or enter areas in which permission has not been granted.

Drones

Should you require to use an unmanned aircraft (also known as a drone) for the purposes of filming on Bolton Council land then you must engage with Bolton Film Office. Advanced planning and liaison must take place with the CAA, Bolton Council and any other stakeholders.

For more information, please read the [Filming in England guidelines](#) or refer to the [CAA website](#) for more information.

All documentation to be submitted no later than 7 working days before the filming day.

Emergency Services

The production must inform the Emergency Services of any large-scale filming in the street and/or in a public space in liaison with Bolton Film Office. Access for emergency vehicles must always be maintained. Where relevant, the Emergency Services should be duly informed of:

Any special effects, fires or explosions.

Any likely to disruption to traffic.

The impersonation of fire officers or use of pseudo fire tenders.

The impersonation of ambulance staff or use of pseudo ambulance tenders.

Firearms and Offensive Weapons

The use of firearms of any kind is prohibited without prior agreement between the production, Greater Manchester Police, Bolton Film Office, Bolton Council, and the appropriate emergency services. There may be occasions when the presence of a GMP officer is required to attend location for public reassurance.

It is the responsibility of the Production to ensure the safe custody of the firearms and/or the offensive weapon at all times.

An armourer must be present during filming shoots involving firearms and/or offensive weapons.

Generators

All generators must comply with the specific requirements of the Environmental Protection Act (1990) and be positioned as far away as reasonably practicable from all residential and business properties unless prior permission has been given

When using a generator it is essential that adequate protection/drip trays are used between the surface and the generator in order to avoid any spilled fuel/leaking oil spoiling the surface.

All alternative methods of power should be explored in the interest of sustainability. Please discuss your requirements with Bolton Film Office who can work with you to explore alternative methods of power generation.

Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of the Production to ensure that employees are in compliance with current Health and Safety legislation and regulations (see Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992).

It is a criminal offence to breach Health and Safety Law and Regulations, failure to do so may invalidate the Production insurances and result in prosecution.

There are many types of risk assessment required to be produced by a competent and qualified person on behalf of the production, for all activity relating to filming. Some examples of such risk assessments you may need include, but not exhaustive to; security risks, generic filming activity, stunts, flammable or toxic materials, temporary and permanent construction work, working at heights, the use of cranes and cherry pickers, vehicle related filming, static and temporary production office space and unit bases.

Where applicable Bolton Council via Bolton Film Office require risk assessments to be provided in advance of filming taking place to ensure necessary qualified representatives have reviewed all relevant activities and given feedback, where necessary. Failure to provide this information in advance may result in the film permit being refused.

High Visibility Clothing

Crew members, production personnel and 3rd party sub-contractors are required when working on the public highway to wear necessary PPE clothing to European Standard EN471 Class 2 minimum. This is an essential safety requirement under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974 (and all related Regulations and Codes of Practice).

Failure to wear appropriate PPE clothing and adhering to the legislation may invalidate your production company insurance and result in your Film Permit being withdrawn.

Highways and Traffic Management

Any requirements for Highway and Traffic Management must be discussed in full with Bolton Council via Bolton Film Office at the earliest opportunity as there are statutory requirements which must be adhered to.

Notice periods and charges vary depending on the level of control which is being requested.

Historic Buildings, Conservation Areas and Nature Reserves

Bolton has a number of historic buildings, conservation areas and nature reserves, which must be protected and preserved. Due care and attention must be observed when planning any productions in these areas.

Details of filming plans and intentions must be submitted to Bolton Film Office with advance notice, there may be limitations to what can be achieved in these areas, and additional insurance may be required.

Indemnity and Insurance

The production company must indemnify Bolton Council, its officers, servants and agents against all liabilities, actions, claims, costs, damages, demands, expenses and penalties brought by any person or persons for any property damage, personal injury, sickness, illness or death arising out of the Production Companies use of requested locations, land, public highways, pavements, footpaths, buildings or facilities other than that attributable to the negligence of the Bolton Council its officers servants and agents. For the avoidance of doubt, liability for death or personal injury as a result of the Production Companies negligence is not limited to the requested amount of Public Liability Insurance cover.

All production companies must carry Public Liability Insurance with a minimum limit of indemnity to the sum of ten million pounds (£10,000,000.00) in respect of any one accident or series of accidents arising out of your filming activities.

No filming request will be granted without prior documented proof of adequate Public Liability Insurance with evidence that the insurance cover certificate is valid. Copies of such certificates should be provided to Bolton Council, in English, in advance of filming and should be made available, on demand, to anyone affected by the location filming activities of the Production Company.

Lighting

Bolton Council via the Bolton Film Office must be informed in advance of any proposed lighting stands being placed on the carriageway or footway. Lighting or any other equipment should not cause a hazard to the general public, and no danger or annoyance should be caused by the dazzle of lights.

The following considerations should be taken to prevent any risk to the public or Production Company employees, and should be detailed in the production risk assessment:

- Lights above ground level and lighting stands are properly secured.
- Lighting stands placed on a footway are attended at all times or are weighted and secured
- Lights do not dazzle ANY motorists
- Lights are not shone directly towards residential or business properties at any time without specific permission
- Blackouts are made available so as to protect the public from light pollution when required

Night Filming

Bolton Film Office considers any filming activities taking place between 22:00 and 08:00 as 'unsocial hours', or 'night filming'.

As soon as you are aware that you need to shoot at night at your chosen public location, an application must be submitted to Bolton Film Office detailing the request, including all scenes, action and equipment to be used. This will be reviewed and subject to resident consultation and agreement. Please allow adequate time for this.

Production should do a letter drop to residents of the area detailing the requested filming, with a copy sent to Bolton Film office for internal circulation, which should include production contact details for residents to contact to obtain more information.

Consideration must be taken to residents of the area, including lighting and noise control. Where it is unavoidable to use generators, they should be silenced. Radio communications should be via earpiece. Avoid light spill, and temporary structures and mobile platforms should not intrude into anyone's property.

Crew should be respectful of the local community, and any unnecessary crew and production amenities should be sited away from residential properties.

Upon wrap, all equipment should be packed away as quietly as possible, and depending on the time, technical vehicles may be asked to remain on site until the morning.

Good practice is to then do a further letter drop to residents with words of appreciation, thanking them for their patience and continued support.

Noise and Nuisance

Productions are reminded to respect the local communities, and noise must be kept to a minimum, particularly when setting up early in the morning or de-rigging in the evening. Where possible, crew amenities should be sited away from residential and business properties, and technical vehicle moves should be conducted in a respectful manner and may be asked to be moved during standard working hours.

Parking

Production vehicles should be parked in designated, publicly available parking areas, or in designated parking areas agreed by Bolton Council. Engines should be switched off on arrival.

Productions may apply for parking dispensations or suspensions to be reserved for tech vehicles or essential works taking place. Productions must discuss their requirements in advance and require a minimum notice of 5 working days.

Permits

An application to film must be submitted to Bolton Film Office with details of proposed action, and if agreed, Bolton Film Office will issue permission/permit to allow filming.

Activities carried out by productions are limited to the areas, dates, and times in which permission has been granted.

Productions must provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance (no less than £10m) and a Risk Assessment before any permissions granted.

Police and Emergency Services

Emergency Services should always be informed of any large-scale filming activity, and access for emergency vehicles must be maintained at all times, regardless of the size of production or filming activity.

Bolton/Greater Manchester Police should be notified of all filming activity, and special guidance will be sought for any filming involving the staging of crimes, accidents, or use of firearms; dressing in police uniforms and using action vehicles; when filming may incur security or crowd control issues.

Publicity

The Production (distributor or broadcaster) shall provide Bolton Film Office with publicity material and information regarding transmission dates prior to general release, by way of marketing the services of the Bolton Film Office wherever possible.

Residents and Businesses

To encourage a positive filming environment in residential and commercial areas, productions are expected to effectively consult, include, and plan with all those which will be directly affected by the activity. The engagement will garner long term benefits supporting filming in the future.

Copies of any letter-drops must be shared with Bolton Film Office. Any productions that do not act responsibly on location may be declined filming permissions in the future.

Any issues or concerns that a Production is experiencing on location regarding local communities and businesses must be flagged to Bolton Film Office as soon as possible.

Rivers and Waterways

Productions must liaise with Bolton Council via Bolton Film Office if there are any plans to film on a waterway. Certain health and safety measures and consideration to wildlife may apply.

Risk Assessments

Bolton Film Office must see all risk assessments relating to any filming activity taking place.

Rubbish and Waste Removal

It is the responsibility of the Production to ensure that all waste is responsibly removed before the end of each filming day and at the end of the filming period all environs are returned to the same condition in which they were found. Bolton Council encourages recycling, please contact the Bolton Film Office for details of the nearest recycling point or for commercial waste removal.

Scaffolding Towers

The use of any proposed scaffolding towers must be discussed with Bolton Film Office in no less than 7 days in advance of the shoot. Charges and a licence may apply depending on the nature of the proposal. Any scaffold construction must be provided and erected by a certified supplier. Any damage resulting from the positioning of the scaffolding will be repaired at a cost to the Production Company.

Security

Productions must always use SIA licenced security for all licensable activity. Licensable activity includes, but is not limited to: manned guarding (guarding premises against unauthorised access; guarding property against destruction or damage and theft), and guarding cash or valuables in transit.

Set Construction and Temporary Structures

It is the responsibility of the Production Company that all temporary structures (both on the highway and within a building/temporary studio) constructed/designed by the Production must comply to The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. Planning permission may be required for some temporary structures such as (not exclusive to): The building of a temporary set which will be up for more than 21 days from construction to strike; the prolonged use of a building as a set/temporary studio (such as Change of Use permission).

Please speak to Bolton Film Office for more information about planning permissions.

Stunts, Special Effects and Pyrotechnics

Bolton Film Office will be notified if any stunts, special effects (including weather effects and wet downs) and pyrotechnics are to be used. A full method statement and risk assessment will be required, and may only be carried out with the approval of Bolton Council via Bolton Film Office.

All stunts, special effects and pyrotechnics must be under the direct control of a named qualified stunt coordinator or special effects operative and comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Traffic Management

All traffic management on the highways must be discussed with the Bolton Film Office and approvals granted by the relevant Bolton Council authorities.

See Highways section for further details.