

Film Charter for Midlothian Council

In association with Film Edinburgh

Midlothian Council and Film Edinburgh (the Edinburgh Film Office) are committed to facilitating and supporting film, television and commercial productions in Midlothian. Their commitment is demonstrated through this Film Charter, which sets out a shared framework for coordination, communication and fair practice across all relevant Council services.



1. Coordination and Communication

Film Edinburgh promotes and facilitates filming across Midlothian, Edinburgh, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders. It acts as the first point of contact for all production enquiries and coordinates with local authorities and agencies.

All initial filming enquiries for locations within Midlothian should be directed to Film Edinburgh in the first instance to facilitate the production process and to enable the monitoring of the economic impact of filming activity across the region.

If contacted directly, Council services and other stakeholders should check that the production is registered with Film Edinburgh.

Film Edinburgh will assess the production's requirements and refer details to the relevant Midlothian Council services and relevant stakeholder. This centralised approach ensures that all enquiries are managed consistently, transparently, and within agreed timescales.

Each participating Council service will have a nominated Officer and an alternate to ensure continuity of service. These officers will:

- Act as the point of contact for Film Edinburgh and production companies.
- Advise on local permissions, operational constraints, and available facilities.
- Ensure filming requests are reviewed in line with health, safety, and legal requirements.
- Coordinate internal approvals where multiple services are affected.

The Economic Development Officer (Tourism, Culture & Heritage) will oversee the Council's overall coordination of filming activity, working closely with Film Edinburgh to monitor demand, economic impact, and community feedback.

Regular communication will be maintained between Film Edinburgh and Council services to share updates on active and upcoming productions. Where appropriate, Council teams such as Roads, Property, Greenspace, and Environmental Health will participate in joint planning or site meetings to resolve issues at an early stage.

All Council staff and services are expected to be as cooperative as possible in supporting filming, recognising its contribution to Midlothian's economy, reputation, and cultural identity. The Council's aim is to provide a professional, efficient and welcoming service to production companies while ensuring that the needs of residents, businesses and public safety are respected.

Where larger or more complex productions are anticipated, Film Edinburgh and Midlothian Council will establish clear lines of communication, escalation procedures, and agreed points of contact to ensure filming can proceed smoothly and responsively.



2. Exterior Filming

Pre-Production Meetings

Where a production's requirements involve multiple services or agencies, Film Edinburgh will convene a pre-production meeting involving the production company and key Council officers. This ensures that requests are understood, feasible, and compliant with health, safety and traffic regulations.

Traffic Management and Public Space Use

Traffic management, parking, and use of public space are the main areas of interaction between production companies and the Council. Cooperation between Council services and other stakeholders will ensure that filming is facilitated smoothly, with all statutory notifications and permissions in place.

Where relevant, the relevant council service will notify emergency services, public utilities and affected stakeholders of significant street filming. Productions involving staged accidents, weapons, or special effects must liaise directly with Police Scotland for approval and supervision.

Council Guidance and Permits

Production companies will receive guidance from Film Edinburgh and Midlothian Council about required permits, applicable fees, and notice periods. The Council will make every reasonable effort to facilitate requests while ensuring compliance with regulations and operational capacity.

Police Services

Police Scotland will advise whether their involvement is required.

Where support is deemed necessary, any associated fees will be payable directly to Police Scotland and are subject to their operational availability. Please note, production companies must employ a professional traffic management company to fulfil the terms of any Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice (TTRN) or Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO).

Fees and Indemnities

Midlothian Council is committed to achieving best value in the use of public assets while recognising the wider economic benefits that film and television production bring to the local economy.

Fees for the use of Council property and services will be charged at an appropriate rate, reflecting both the value of the opportunity and the need to cover Council resource time, administration and any operational impacts.

Use of Council Property

Use of Council property as a filming location will be supported wherever feasible, subject to operational, safety and security considerations.

Location fees will be determined based on the level of disruption, staff time, and the nature of the production. Film Edinburgh can advise on standard rates and benchmarks across the region.

Use of Council Services

In addition to location fees, the Council will charge for materials, permits, and staff time required to facilitate production activity.

An estimate outlining all expected charges will be provided to the production company in advance of filming.

Contingency should be allowed for additional requests or schedule changes.

Once filming is complete, a full and detailed account will be issued for payment.

Insurance and Liability

All production companies filming in Midlothian must hold Public Liability Insurance with a minimum indemnity limit of £10 million, together with any other insurance required by law.

The production company bears sole responsibility for any risks, damages, or liabilities arising from its activities, staff, or contractors.





3 Code of Practice

All productions filming in Midlothian must adhere to Midlothian's Code of Practice.

Filmmakers must act courteously and responsibly towards residents, businesses, and Council staff, ensuring minimal disruption to local communities.

Council liaison officers will monitor compliance and report any breaches to Film Edinburgh.

4 Local Benefits & Partnership Working

Midlothian Council's Economic Development Service (Tourism, Culture and Heritage) will work with Film Edinburgh and relevant Council teams to:

- Promote filming opportunities across Midlothian.
- Support local businesses in supplying productions (accommodation, catering, equipment, etc.).
- Encourage sustainable and respectful filming practices.
- Maximise local income through clear cost frameworks and re-investment of filming revenues into local infrastructure.

Business Gateway advisors will also help inform local businesses about opportunities to engage with the Film Edinburgh Partnership and promote their services to the screen industry.

5. Community Wealth Building

Midlothian Council is committed to ensuring that filming activity delivers inclusive economic benefits and supports the principles of Community Wealth Building.

The Council will work with Film Edinburgh and local partners to maximise the positive impact of film and television production on Midlothian's economy, businesses and communities.

Key objectives include:

- Supporting local supply chains: Encouraging productions to use local suppliers for accommodation, catering, transport, set construction, and other services wherever possible.
- Creating local opportunities: Promoting work experience, training and employment opportunities for residents through engagement with colleges, schools, and creative sector partners.
- Encouraging fair work and sustainability: Supporting productions that adopt fair work practices, local hiring, and environmentally responsible approaches to filming.
- Retaining local value: Reinvesting income from filming into initiatives that enhance community assets, cultural facilities and public realm improvements.
- Partnership and promotion: Working with Business Gateway and Economic Development services to connect Midlothian businesses to the screen industry supply chain and to showcase the area's capabilities as a film-friendly region.

By embedding Community Wealth Building within filming activity, Midlothian Council aims to ensure that the social and economic benefits of the screen industry are shared across local communities and contribute directly to inclusive growth.



Contact

Film Edinburgh

Email: film@edinburgh.gov.uk

Phone number: +44 (0)131 529 6273

Midlothian Council

Email: econ-dev@midlothian.gov.uk