

A Brief Guide to Filming, Recording and Photography in The Royal Parks

The Royal Parks Filming & Events Team

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to act as a guide for those undertaking filming and photography in The Royal Parks.

About the Royal Parks

The Royal Parks are: Bushy Park (with the Longford River); The Green Park; Greenwich Park; Hyde Park; Kensington Gardens; The Regent's Park, Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St James's Park.

The Royal Parks is also responsible for managing Brompton Cemetery, Victoria Tower Gardens, Canning Green and Poet's Corner.

Definitions:

'Filming' and 'Photography' – a definition

The term 'filming' refers to all forms of moving image production. This includes feature films, television, commercials, music videos, drama documentaries, corporate productions, video and interactive media.

The term 'photography' refers to all forms of still, digital and photo imaging. This includes advertising, editorial, fashion and corporate photography.

News and Current Affairs

For avoidance of doubt, material intended for **news** programmes should be discussed in the first instance with The Royal Parks' Press Office. Contact: press@royalparks.org.uk / Royal Parks News Permit - The Royal Parks.

The Royal Parks Policy on Filming and Photography

The Royal Parks was integral in drafting the first ever **London Filming** Partnership between the moving image production industry and all public and private sector stakeholders affected by location filming in London. The Partnership is aimed at ensuring that London is a place where location filming can be

conducted efficiently and successfully thereby delivering the significant economic benefits associated with filming (including local employment and tourism) while also being sensitive to the needs of those who live and work in London. The Royal Parks fully supports and endorses the Partnership.

The Royal Parks welcomes filming in the parks that is **consistent with one or more of the following aims:**

- promotes the parks as special natural environments and historical landscapes.
- respects the values of the parks, our users and stakeholders.
- raises the profile of London and the parks as tourist destinations in the foreign and home markets.
- contributes to wider Government policy objectives.

All requests to film will be assessed according to these aims along with existing scheduled events, planned maintenance work, potential security risks, ceremonial activities and political sensitivities.

Furthermore:

- The Royal Parks supports **amateur and student photographers** taking photographs for a private portfolio, educational coursework or other non-commercial use. It is necessary to apply for permission to use images of any of The Royal Parks for commercial purposes, this includes professional portfolios.
- The Royal Parks supports emerging talent and will offer reduced rates where possible to **low-budget, small scale and student film-makers**. The same process of 'How to Film' should be followed and students must produce a letter on headed paper from their educational establishment confirming their student status. Method statements and risk assessments will need to be shown. Film London can help with these if necessary – call 020 7613 7676 and ask for the Locations Department.
- The Royal Parks may suggest a site meeting to meet filmmakers face-to-face and discuss the logistics of their request. This is essential for large scale or complicated productions. An early meeting and/or discussion with the Production Designer / Art Department will be appreciated.
- Film makers will be asked to provide **in writing** as much information as possible on the following: proposed dates and times; potential locations; content and nature of the script or relevant script pages; talent; public liability insurance; potential stunts, special effects, pyrotechnics, wet-downs, use of helicopters, gun-fire/fire-arms, nudity and reference to royalty, politicians or public figures; road closures; numbers of vehicles, cast, crew and extras; equipment; parking and budget.

- Filming of a blasphemous, salacious or derogatory nature will not be permitted.
- As a general rule, Filming & Photography in or near any of the Royal Parks' playgrounds is prohibited. There are exceptions to this rule and requests may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and shoots permitted by special arrangement. When it is permitted an advance notice warning must be clearly displayed. It is advisable to use children whose parents/guardians have given prior permission and signed a release form and who have been cleared through the relevant Local Authority's Education Welfare Service.
- Vox-pops are not permitted in any of The Royal Parks.
- The Royal Parks has a responsibility to conserve for future generations the Parks, their buildings, wildlife, historic landscapes, views and vistas. Film-makers must therefore agree to abide by all statutory legislation relating to filming, in addition to professional standards of filming described in the **Location Filming in London Code of Practice**. This can be found on-line at Film London's website: [Location Filming in London Code of Practice | Film London](#)
- People wishing to undertake wedding or lifestyle photography or filming in any of the Royal Parks will be required to obtain a permit to do so. For more information and to download an application follow this link [Wedding & lifestyle photography | The Royal Parks](#)
- **The Royal Parks will respond to filming and photography requests as quickly as possible and recognises the deadlines of the film and photographic industries. Requests with less than 5 days' notice cannot be guaranteed. The Royal Parks will acknowledge receipt of applications within 24 hours and no later than 48hours (office hours only).**
- It is important to protect the ecology of The Royal Parks. There be may instances where filming or photography cannot be permitted due to ecological considerations. For example, except for exceptional circumstances, filming or photography of the deer is not permitted during the rutting (Sept-Nov) and birthing (May-July) seasons.

Filming and Photography Process - How to film in The Royal Parks

There are six main steps to be achieved through mutual discussion and negotiation:

1. Pre-application advice.
2. Formal application and site visit / planning meeting (if required).
3. Agree a fee.
4. Sign legally binding Contract.
5. Arrange advance payment.
6. Debrief (if required).

1. Pre-application Advice

An initial conversation and/or site visit with location managers (LMs) not familiar with The Royal Parks or planning a large or complex shoot, is required to discuss the logistics of a request and determine from an early stage what may and may not be achievable.

Filming Department

0300 061 2111, 0300 061 2110, 0300 061 2175

film@royalparks.org.uk

Filmmakers must provide as much detailed information as possible, including dates/ times, proposed locations, content and nature of script, crew numbers and public liability insurance details.

Location Managers and Producers will be given early warning when any aspect of their proposal may not be possible, and The Royal Parks will always strive to find a compromise or alternative location. Following a discussion to agree activities the LM should submit a formal application in writing.

2. Formal Application and Planning

The request should be put in writing using The Royal Parks' online application form: [Commercial filming and photography | The Royal Parks](#)

A copy of Public Liability Insurance (minimum expectation of £5 million per incident/each occurrence. £10 million for large-scale production) should be included along with a method statement and a site-specific risk assessment.

Receipt of a formal application will be acknowledged within 24 hours and no later than 48hours.

The website address for the Location Filming in London Code of Practice can be found on the Licence to Film and adhering to it will be a legally binding requirement.

Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the various sensitivities and other commitments of the Parks but with a flexible approach aimed at helping LMs to meet their creative brief.

Depending on the scale of filming, a planning meeting(s) and/or site visit(s) to confirm logistical arrangements may be advised at this stage once the request has been generally agreed.

3. Fee

The Royal Parks is committed to proactively raising income to benefit the conservation and presentation of the Royal Parks and will therefore charge for location filming in most cases.

A broad outline of the fee structure is available on The Royal Parks website: [Filming and Photography Rate Card 2024.pdf](#)

Any additional services based on an LM's specific requirements will be charged at cost.

Filming or photography cancelled at late notice will be charged a cancellation fee.

4. Sign Filming Location Agreement

A formal location agreement will be issued, confirming all mutually agreed arrangements and restrictions. A copy signed by both parties must be lodged with the Royal Parks and with the filmmaker.

Filming cannot proceed unless a legally binding agreement is in place.

Changes proposed once the location agreement has been signed must be mutually agreed in writing and appended to the original agreement.

5. Arrange Advance Payment

Payment must be made in advance of filming by cheque, credit card or BACS. A BACS payment requires a purchase order number to be provided in order for The Royal Parks to issue an invoice. Filmmakers will be issued with a receipt as soon as possible.

Depending on the nature and scale of the project, a deposit may be required to safeguard against damage and / or reinstatement.

6. De-brief

The Royal Parks welcomes a conversation or meeting once filming is completed to discuss what worked and what didn't to continually improve the service to filmmakers. The Royal Parks may, at their discretion, and normally for large shoots request a formal de-brief.