

ROTORUA FILM PROTOCOL

Your guide to filming in
the Rotorua district



ROTORUA^{NZ}

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WELCOME NAU MAI, HAERE MAI

Rotorua is world-renowned for its spectacular geothermal activity, stunning lakes and beautiful forests. Rotorua is also home to rich Māori history and culture and we are known for our sense of community pride and manaakitanga (hospitality).

Nestled in the beautiful Bay of Plenty, Rotorua is close to snow-capped mountains, gorgeous beaches and sparkling rivers. It lies in close proximity to Auckland as well as other metropolitan centres and small, rural towns.

We welcome you to enjoy all that Rotorua has to offer. We're proud of where we live and we look forward to working with you to share these landscapes with New Zealand and the world.

Film Rotorua works to facilitate approvals and permits (where required) for local and visiting film crews as well as advising on potential locations and co-ordinating site recces.

This document outlines the approval process for filmmakers and photographers who want to shoot on land that is owned and/or managed by Rotorua Lakes Council. It also outlines what is expected when filming in the Rotorua district.

WHO ARE WE?

Film Rotorua and Film Bay of Plenty work together to ensure Rotorua continues to develop as a film-friendly production environment.

ABOUT FILM ROTORUA

Film Rotorua is a division of RotoruaNZ. RotoruaNZ is a council-controlled organisation responsible for the tourism sector and economic development of Rotorua.

Film Rotorua does not have delegated authority to issue permits to film in the district, but provides advice and support for film permit applications in collaboration with Rotorua Lakes Council.

Film Rotorua can assist you in the following areas:

- processing film permit applications
- recommending possible filming locations
- liaising with various Council departments and mana whenua (local Māori landholders) representatives involved in permitting requests on public spaces
- providing advice on actions you will need to take to mitigate any impacts of filming on public land, such as liaising with local businesses and residents before and during filming.

For more information, please visit the [Film Rotorua webpage](#).

You can contact Film Rotorua by emailing film@rotoruanz.com

ABOUT FILM BAY OF PLENTY

Film Bay of Plenty is the regional film office. They collaborate, increase capability and content, celebrate culture and contribute to the growing screen industry in the Bay of Plenty.

For more information, please visit the Film Bay of Plenty website filmbayofplenty.com or email admin@filmbayofplenty.com

OBTAINING CONSENT FOR FILMING OR PHOTOGRAPHY

Film Rotorua works with Rotorua Lakes Council to manage the permit process. To ensure there is enough time for your application to be assessed, it is advised that you contact Film Rotorua as soon as possible to discuss your project's initial permitting needs.

A Rotorua Lakes Council film permit will only apply to land administered by Rotorua Lakes Council. Most parks, reserves, roads, berms and footpaths are considered public land.

Depending on where you wish to film, consultation with mana whenua may be required. Film Rotorua will co-ordinate this on the applicant's behalf.

FILMING AT THE LAKES

If you are planning to film an area on a Te Arawa lake, you must first seek the permission of **Te Arawa Lakes Trust** and then approach Film Rotorua for a general filming approval or permit. Filming applications to **Te Arawa Lakes Trust** must be lodged at least six weeks prior to filming.

FILMING AT THE FOREST

The land on which the Redwoods (Titokorangi and Whakarewarewa Forests) sits is privately owned by iwi through CNI Iwi Holdings Ltd. The forests are managed by Rotorua Lakes Council and Kaingaroa Timberlands who work together with iwi, Ngāti Whakāue, Tuhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao and Ngā Hapū e Toru, to manage them as productive plantation forests alongside recreational use.

Once you complete the **standard application form**, Film Rotorua will advise what steps need to be taken to obtain a permit for the forests. **Note:** Applications to film in Titokorangi and Whakarewarewa Forests must be lodged at least four weeks prior to filming. Public liability insurance of \$5 million is required to film in the forests.

OBTAINING FILM PERMIT

WHEN DO YOU NEED A PERMIT TO FILM?

You will need a permit for any filming activity taking place on land administered by Rotorua Lakes Council. Most parks, reserves, roads, berms and footpaths are considered public land.

Simply complete the **application form** and a member of the Film Rotorua team will be in touch.

Film Rotorua may require the following information:

- The precise location of the shoot (site plan)
- How you intend to manage parking
- Health and safety plan
- Public Liability Insurance coverage
- Your planned procedures to tidy up and remove any waste
- Whether any structures are to be erected
- Details of any noise your activity is expected to cause
- Any required access to power and water supplies
- Any required access to, or planned use of, toilet facilities
- The potential effect of your activity on traffic flows, including any temporary road closures

All productions filming on public or private land must comply with this Rotorua Film Protocol document.

PERMITTING TIMEFRAMES

Minimum processing time for a completed film application:

- three full working days for standard applications (longer timeframes may be needed for complex or sensitive locations or high/major impact activities – please check with Film Rotorua)
- five full working days for an application with a Stop/Go Traffic Management Plan (TMP)
- 15-18 full working days for high or major impact activity
- 20-25 full working days for sites of significance to mana whenua
- 44 full working days for an application with a road closure TMP

Note: any road closure TMPs must be submitted before you apply for a film permit.

CHANGE IN USE

Following the approval of a permit, use of the location shall be restricted to the specific details on the application. Should you need to advise of any changes, contact Film Rotorua as soon as possible.

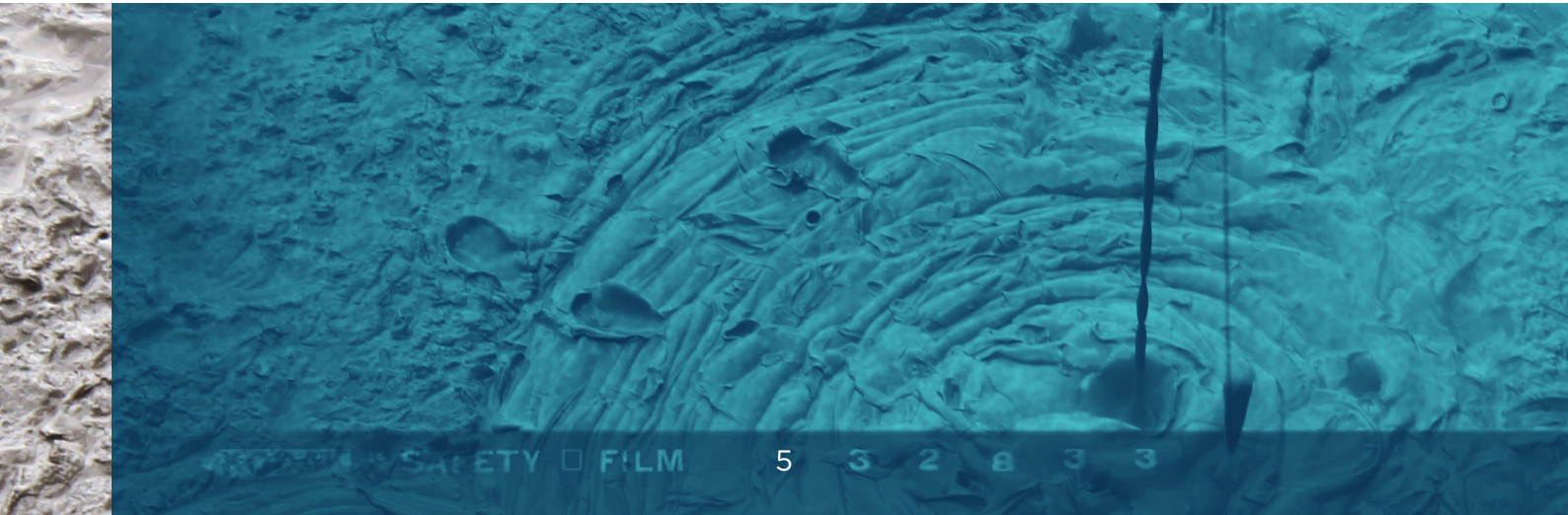
FILM IMPACTS

The following table outlines levels of impact of filming activity in Rotorua.

Each film shoot is assessed on a case-by-case basis and what may be considered medium impact in one location could be deemed high impact in another. This table should be read as a guide only.

The types of factors considered when determining impact include, but are not exclusive to:

- the number of people involved in the shoot;
- the location, including (but not exclusive to) whether it is an operational site, a sensitive natural environment, a site of significance to mana whenua, is on or near a heritage place, access to the site is difficult or the site is subject to specific controls in Rotorua Lakes Council plans, policies or bylaws and the cumulative impact of filming on the site;
- time on site;
- the type of equipment and props being used on site (note: any commercial or organised filming using a drone will require a permit to film);
- access requirements, impact on public access to the location and impacts on service levels for users (such as the length of time and extent to which public facilities are closed);
- vehicles associated with filming.



FILMING FEES AND ASSOCIATED COSTS

There may be other council charges relating to filming in public spaces in Rotorua. These charges may include, but are not necessarily limited to, costs related to resource consents and building compliance fees, road closures and the hire of Council-managed facilities. Please note that fees and other council charges are subject to change.

Production companies will also be responsible for any costs associated with public notices, if required, engaging private companies for traffic management, resource consent applications or any other required service.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PARKING

Rotorua Lakes Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency (**NZTA**) are responsible for receiving and assessing Traffic Management Plan (TMP) requests for road closures, parking permits, stop/go, or any activity impacting normal use of a road or footpath.

The following resources are intended to provide an overview of TMP requirements and procedures. For specific questions on traffic management in Rotorua, contact the Council Transport Planning Team at RCARadministrator@rdc.govt.nz or phone 07 348 4199.

CLOSURE OF STATE HIGHWAYS

If you need to close a State Highway, this is managed by the New Zealand Transport Agency (**NZTA**). For information on the temporary use of State Highways, please contact NZTA.

FILM IMPACT TABLE

	LOW IMPACT	MEDIUM IMPACT	HIGH IMPACT	MAJOR IMPACT
Permit status	Permit may be required (depending on location of filming – please contact Film Rotorua to discuss)	Permit required	Permit required – other applications and necessary consents may be required	Permit required – other applications and necessary consents will be required
Number of people on site	Up to nine crew/ talent combined	Up to 30 crew and 20 talent	Up to 50 crew and 100 talent	50+ crew and 100+ talent
Number of equipment vehicles (trucks, vans, utes, cars)	No trucks. Vans, utes, cars only	No more than six trucks	No more than 12 trucks	12+ trucks
Unit base/ catering and structural requirements	No unit base/catering area required. No structures	Small unit base/ catering area required. Minimal structures, e.g. ezi-ups	Unit base/catering area required. Some structures including ezi-ups and mega decks up to 100m ² may require building consent	Large unit base/ catering area required. Significant structures and construction will likely require building consent
Equipment requirements	Handheld camera and sound equipment. One camera on tripod. One battery-operated light. No generator	Minimal equipment, e.g. camera tracks, slider and lights on stands	Equipment used, e.g. camera cranes	Extensive equipment
Traffic management	No disruption of roads or footpaths	Basic traffic management required	Traffic management required, including road closures	Significant traffic management required. Closing of major roads
Impact on the public and communities of interest* and consultation requirements	No disruption is caused to council stakeholders, businesses, residents, motorists or other events in the vicinity	May be some minor disruption to council stakeholders, businesses, residents, motorists or other events in the vicinity. Local area letter drop 48 hours prior required	Likely to be some disruption to council stakeholders, businesses, residents, or motorists or other events in the vicinity. Local area letter drop 48 hours prior. Consultation may be required	Likely to be significant disruption to council stakeholders, businesses, residents, motorists or other events in the vicinity. Letter drop area 48 hours prior and possibly consultation
Environmental	Assessment of the potential positive and negative impacts of filming on the environment will be determined depending on the location and a range of factors including, but not limited to, time of year, potential for cumulative effects, nature and scale of the proposed filming activity, time on site, the type of equipment and props being used and ability to mitigate and or manage any effects			

The guidelines set out in Table 1 do not apply to the lakes and other cultural land sites; separate guidance will be given to applicants upon inquiring about filming on the lakes and significant cultural sites.

** Communities of interest include, but are not exclusive to, local residents and businesses, visitors and regular users of public open spaces and/or community facilities such as sporting, recreational and community organisations.*

PARKING AND LOADING

A detailed parking plan must be submitted as part of the filming permit application. In some cases, reserving specific parking spaces will require a TMP.

Unless expressly permitted otherwise, parking and loading arrangements for filming are as follows:

- On-street parking should be minimised as much as possible, and access maintained for crucial residential and business deliveries.
- Essential vehicles (i.e. equipment and/or large vehicles) are to be parked legally and with the relevant permits. Where possible, essential vehicles are to be parked in front of buildings that are either vacant or closed during the hours of filming activity.
- Crew and cast vehicles, and other non-essential vehicles, must have prior consent from retail premises or neighbouring facilities (such as community centres, libraries, sports facilities and schools) before making use of their customer or other car parking spaces.
- All vehicles associated with the filming activity must be parked legally in accordance with New Zealand law (i.e. facing the correct way, not parked over yellow lines).

- Access to loading zones for the purposes of servicing and delivering goods to and from local businesses must be maintained.
- During business hours, production companies are to use loading zones for the purposes of delivering or collecting goods for no longer than the times specified on signage (generally no longer than five minutes).
- Parking permits are available to hire in metered parking areas. These allow you to park in time-restricted roadside car parking spaces for longer than the allowed time. These do not reserve a specific roadside car parking space.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Rotorua bus services and routes are managed by Bay of Plenty Regional Council (BOPRC).

A TMP may be required for any filming done on public transport.

PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Unless expressly permitted otherwise, pedestrian arrangements for filming are required as follows:

- **Use of location/production assistants** – Location/production assistants are to keep the public informed of the filming activity and escort them through the filming area.
- **Maintenance of pedestrian passage** – Pedestrian passage to be maintained through the public space the filming activity is occurring on. On occasion, productions can ask pedestrians to hold from walking through a shot.
- **Modification of pedestrian passage** – Minor modifications to pedestrian passage may be developed as part of the permit process. In the case of a footpath closure or detour route, a TMP drawn up by a certified traffic management company must be supplied.
- **Access to doorways** – Unrestricted access to doorways is to be maintained.
- **Wheelchair access** – The filming activity must allow for the needs of wheelchair users to move through the public space and/or safely access an appropriate detour.

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

Production companies carrying out filming activity may be required to communicate with residents, businesses and any other parties affected by the activity. What this communication involves depends on the impact and location of the filming activity as outlined below:

LETTER DROP

Depending on the impact of your shoot, you may be required to give affected residents at least 48 hours' notice and affected businesses at least two working days' notice.

Production companies should hand-deliver a flyer to each residence or business in the affected area. A draft must be supplied to Film Rotorua for approval prior to distribution.

The flyer should contain the following information (a template is available from Film Rotorua):

- the name of the activity;
- the name of the organiser;
- the general nature of the activity;
- the duration of the activity including set-up and pack-down periods;
- the location manager's contact details before and on the day of the event - including the mobile phone number of someone who can lead any required action
- Rotorua Lakes Council's contact centre phone number: 07 348 4199;
- in some cases, a parking plan or site map might be required.

High and major impact film shoots must give affected residents at least 48 hours' notice, unless access to their properties will be affected in which case five days' notice is required. You may be required to provide alternative parking solutions for affected residents. Affected businesses require five working days' notice.

Road closures – There is a legislative process that needs to be followed for a road closure. This involves Rotorua Lakes Council issuing two public notices in printed news media to inform the public about the road closure. This needs to be actioned at least 12 working days before the proposed date of the road closure, and the production company is responsible for notifying affected businesses and residents at this time also. Longer lead times are recommended for traditionally busy periods such as Easter and Christmas.

If your production has a shorter than normal lead time, please contact Film Rotorua as soon as possible, as production requirements are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

NOISE AND LIGHTING

Filming activity that generates any kind of noise or light disturbance will need to comply with the standards set out in the **Rotorua District Plan**. Production companies must comply with Rotorua Plan noise levels and with the requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Māori have a special cultural and spiritual relationship with the natural environment. Production companies should consider the impact that filming may have on:

- misuse or misappropriation of iwi history, stories, or legends
- inappropriate representation or use of culturally significant images or sites; this can include, but is not limited to, the subject of filming or the depiction of the site (e.g., digitally adapting the appearance of a site in a way that is considered inappropriate)
- use of culturally significant sites, such as a marae

For further information, refer to **Working with Māori in Screen Production by Ngā Aho Whakaari**.

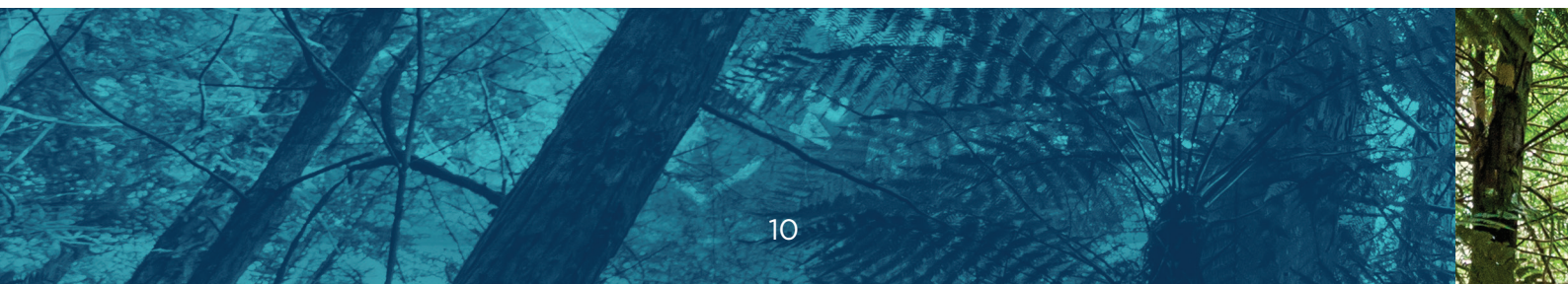
Film Rotorua can assist with facilitating discussions with the appropriate mana whenua if required.

HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 applies to all workplaces, including international productions, while they are working in New Zealand.

Film crews must comply with:

- the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- the **ScreenSafe health and safety guidelines**



- the guidance on best-practice processes for the engagement of crew in the New Zealand screen production industry, as outlined in the **2017 Blue Book**
- any specific health and safety requirements or instructions set out in, or issued conjunction with, your film permit.

As part of your application for a film permit, you will be required to provide a site-specific **health and safety risk assessment** and a **health and safety plan**. This must detail the risks associated with your activities and/or the environment in which the activities are to be conducted, along with how these risks will be effectively managed, and by whom.

AERIAL FILMING

All productions intending to use aerial filming must be familiar with New Zealand's Civil Aviation 18 rules and regulations. See the **Civil Aviation Authority website** for details.

HELICOPTERS

If the production will use helicopters, please discuss your requirements with Film Rotorua as early as possible, as additional safety precautions will need to be considered, and some sites may not be appropriate. Council permission is required to take off or land in a public place, including when dropping off a person or item(s). Fees may be charged. If noise levels in the District Plan are likely to be exceeded, a resource consent will be required.

DRONES/REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS

If you plan to film with a remotely piloted aircraft system (RPAS) or drone, you must comply with the **Civil Aviation Authority Rules Part 101 and Part 102**, and the **Council's guidelines**.

Under the CAA rules, the Council must give its permission to fly drones over Council land.

REMOVAL OF RUBBISH AND RETURNING A SITE TO ITS ORIGINAL CONDITION

Production companies are encouraged to look for opportunities to prevent, reduce and recycle waste from the outset. Depending on your film proposal you may be required to prepare a waste management plan. This plan is designed to help identify expected waste streams and how to reduce them.

It is the responsibility of the production company to ensure that any area associated with filming activity is returned to its original condition, including the removal of all signs and waste. All property removed or disguised for filming purposes must be reinstated upon completion of filming.

The production company must report any damage to the Council as soon as it is caused or discovered. Reinstatement costs will be charged to the production if the site is left in an unacceptable condition, or if damage has not been repaired to the Council's standards.

COMPLIANCE WITH RELEVANT PLANS, POLICIES, BYLAWS AND RULES

Production companies must comply with **Rotorua Lakes Council policies and bylaws** in relation to conduct in public open spaces. These include, but are not limited to, alcohol bans, animal control, signage rules and smokefree areas.

Maintaining responsible and positive behaviour when filming in public open spaces is important to ensure ongoing access to these locations.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE ROTORUA FILM PROTOCOL AND PERMIT CONDITIONS

Full compliance with the Rotorua Film Protocol and the conditions of the film permit is expected. If a production company fails to comply with Rotorua Lakes Council policy, plans or bylaws, the Rotorua Film Protocol or the conditions of a film permit, Rotorua Lakes Council reserves the right to revoke the permit for non-compliance.

Film Rotorua will monitor filming activity at its discretion, particularly for filming in sensitive areas and those considered to have a high or major impact. Production companies must follow any directions given by Film Rotorua or the wider council organisation.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Those undertaking filming activity on open spaces in Rotorua will likely require public liability insurance (to the amount of \$2 million cover) to cover any damages done to council property, private property or serious accidents caused by the filming activity. If you will be using a drone during filming, your public liability insurance will need to include an aviation clause and you will need to list the pilot and aircraft details. Public liability insurance of \$5 million is required to film in the Titokorangi and Whakarewarewa Forests.

FILMING POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE MATERIAL

The filming of content injurious to the public good may be subject to additional levels of scrutiny to ensure consistency with Council's legal and policy obligations.

Production companies filming content for television commercials that may be considered socially or environmentally irresponsible should consult the **Advertising Standards Authority website**.





FILMING ON PRIVATE PREMISES

Production companies using private businesses or residences for film shoots should be familiar with the Rotorua Film Protocol and the need to be respectful of adjacent businesses and residents, particularly with regards to on-street parking, lighting and noise. Filming on private premises must comply with the District Plan. Some filming activity on private property may still require resource consent – please speak to Film Rotorua about your requirements as early as possible. Film Rotorua will also be able to advise on any activities or events taking place in the public spaces immediately adjacent to the premises.

Film Rotorua welcomes discussions with private property owners on how they can work together in the best interests of production companies and local communities.

PRODUCTIONS USING FIREARMS, STUNTS OR PYROTECHNICS

Guidance from the New Zealand Police and/or emergency services should be sought for:

- staging of crimes and accidents
- use of firearms, including prop and replica firearms
- stunts using vehicles, or any stunts with a ‘copycat’ risk
- special effects, explosions, and pyrotechnics
- actors representing Police or emergency services officers (and/or use of their vehicles)
- any disruption to traffic or filming from vehicles
- when filming involves high-profile celebrities, causing security or crowd control issues.

The production company should inform the New Zealand Police and/or appropriate emergency services of all proposed filming in public or private spaces, as agreed with Film Rotorua.

PRODUCTIONS INCLUDING ANIMALS

Production companies wishing to film animals in public places need to be aware of relevant bylaws across the region. For example, filming a dog off-leash in some areas will require a permit. Information about Animal Management bylaws are on the [Council website](#).

FILMING IN SENSITIVE AREAS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Depending on the impact and the nature of the film shoot, some communities may be particularly sensitive to filming impacts. This could be due to the cumulative effects of frequent filming and/or events in the area. Film Rotorua will inform production companies if this is the case for their desired location as soon as possible, and will work with production companies to identify ways of addressing local concerns or accessing alternative sites.

PROTECTING SENSITIVE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE SITES

The natural environment in Rotorua provides stunning locations and is a key reason for filming here. The many different natural environments across Rotorua - our lakes, our mountains, forests, streams and parks - are places of importance to Rotorua residents. It is important our natural environment is treated with respect. Similarly, when filming on or near historic heritage sites or places of cultural significance, it is essential that film crews work in a manner that protects these places.

Consultation with mana whenua may be required.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

To protect the local environment, it is necessary for production companies to minimise the environmental impacts of filming operations.

Consider how crew and cast can travel to and from the film location and whether public transport, buses/shuttles and or ridesharing can be utilised and promoted. Minimise and manage waste to reduce waste to landfill. For example, can single use disposables like plastic water bottles and plastic cups be replaced with reusable alternatives?

Depending on your film proposal, you may be required to prepare a waste management plan. This plan is designed to help identify expected waste streams and how to reduce them.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

To maintain a sustainable industry, it is important that local residents, communities, iwi and businesses have a positive experience of filming. For example, for businesses this could be increased custom through production companies using their products or services, or promotion of their business in the film shoot or credits. Some other ideas on how screen production companies could 'give back' to communities they are filming in are listed below:

- communities often like to see their local area represented on film. If the film project is something that will be screened in New Zealand, inform local residents and businesses of this and consider ways of letting people know when and where it will be screening. Alternatively, send them a copy of the finished product;
- acknowledging, local boards, local communities and organisations in the credits;
- donate to local schools or community organisations;
- carry out promotional filming for affected areas (for example conservation or heritage areas);
- consider how local iwi can benefit and be recognised such as opportunities to refer to the history of an area, provide employment, use correct Māori names for sites and acknowledge these in the credits;
- invite locals to work as extras;
- consider the possibility of work experience opportunities.

