

LOGISTICS

I needed to organise a location that was suited to the setting of my film, which was a house. I needed a house where I could use the whole of the downstairs and the bathroom. Then I needed a second location to be another character's house, a bedroom and the hallway needed to be available.

In order to do this permission for filming forms needed to be signed by the property owners at my two locations, to ensure that I had secured locations for the specific dates that they were needed. In addition I had to take into consideration the atmosphere of the environment I would be filming in, in order to ensure the correct portrayal of the character would be perceived by the audience. For example, I did not film in a run down, derelict building in a poor neighbourhood. This is because I wanted the audience to perceive Lucy and Molly as ordinary teenagers who came from a good home. The locations also affect the budget as hiring locations would cost money therefore, I decided to use of my own house and neighbour's house which resulted in zero expense.

Most of the props that were used for this project I purchased, for example the robe and the pyjamas for my main character. In addition, I borrowed the kettle that was used from a family member.

In order to organise my cast and crew I needed to ensure that everyone was free on the days and times that I wanted to film. My main character was played by my best friend because she suited what I had in my head and she has experience in acting which meant that she was familiar with playing a role. Molly was played by my sister, I chose her for this part she has had a lot of experience in acting and enjoys performance. I also organised for my drama teacher to record the voice of the killer because of his drama experience also because I wanted to use a deep toned male voice. I also ensured that all actors in my film signed an agreement contract to be a part of the project.

As part of organising my crew and cast it was important for me to ensure that all members were familiar with the locations and the times we were going to film. Equally as important was the crew and cast's familiarity with the script. Therefore, I had to ensure they were given the script in good time, two weeks in advance to learn.

In terms of scheduling, it was important to schedule my filming days when all of my cast were free and the property owners could approve. Also it was important for me to film around December/January time because I needed the evenings to be as dark as possible in order to achieve the atmosphere that I wished to create. The way in which I communicated with my cast and crew was via text, email and social media as I felt that this was the most efficient way to pass on information. I also gave them the call sheet a week prior to filming so they were aware of the dates they were needed and what scenes we were filming on these days. In addition organisation and efficiency were key due to the fact that the deadline for this project was approaching so it was important to film fairly quickly.

I filled out an equipment booking form two weeks prior to filming which stated clearly what equipment and what dates I needed it for. I needed to ensure that my teachers were aware

of the equipment and the dates that they needed to be given and returned. I also used the music room to record the voiceover for the killer therefore I needed to ensure that this was room was free on the date that we planned to record this. In order to plan the best day to record I sent an email to the music department asking what availability the recording room had.

CREATIVE PROCESS

I was certain that I wanted to create a short film of the horror genre. My initial idea for my film was to have a counsellor as my protagonist who slowly killed all her patients in different ways that were related to their mental illness. This was too complex for the project in hand because it would have been too long, and I needed a more simple narrative. Another idea was that students were being murdered in a school. The reason why I didn't choose this idea was because I felt that it would need too many characters making it difficult to organise dates and times of filming as I would need to ensure that everyone was free at the same time. Also, the availability of the location was limited.

So my final idea was based on a girl in a house who is being stalked by a killer. During this process I needed to ensure that I was clear of the horror codes and conventions I was using in order to achieve my vision.

To get my final movie idea on paper I wrote a screenplay based on a narrative. At first I was unaware of the format of a screenplay and was unsure of the features I needed to include, for example stage directions and scene headings. After receiving feedback on my first draft I wrote a final draft where I implemented the improvements that were given.

I created a storyboard based on my film by following my step-by-step shot list to provide myself and the actors with a visual representation. I did this using a website called 'Storyboard That' which allowed me to create a digital version of a storyboard. After I was happy with what I'd produced I imported the images into Final Cut and added appropriate sounds to make my storyboard more interactive.

I sourced most of my sounds from YouTube or Final Cut Pro. For example, the horror music that I used for the opening and closing credits of my film I sourced from YouTube. I searched horror movie music and used YouTube MP3 Converter to convert the YouTube file to Final Cut. The noises at the window were a sound file in Final Cut. It was important that all the sounds I used helped to create the atmosphere that I wanted. For example initially the sound of the kettle was a Final Cut file however, I did not feel the sound created the correct effect for the genre and atmosphere of my film, so I sourced my final kettle sound from YouTube.

FINANCE

I was given a £50 budget for the project. With these finances I needed to ensure that I got everything I needed. I didn't have to use finances for the equipment as it was provided by my school. However, I purchased props like the robe which was taken out of my budget. I also provided my actors and crew with food by ordering a pizza and providing drinks and snacks for cast and crew. I purchased the snacks a few days before filming and ordered the

pizza on the night of filming. I also rented the horror movie Scream as it played a vital part in my narrative. I also needed to pay for the adult actors to travel to my house, the teenage actors were free as they used their 16-18 Oyster cards to travel free on the bus.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and safety on set was also another very important factor I needed to consider during the filming process. I did this by successfully carrying out a risk assessment for each of my filming locations by visiting the locations one week before filming, which clearly highlighted what the risks were and how much of a danger they could be to my cast and crew. For example, one of the possible risks was that a member of my cast and crew could trip over wires whilst filming. A way in which I prevented this from occurring was using tape to secure the wires to ensure that they were no longer a hazard. This risk was considered high. One risk that was a surprise for me was that the filming space became quite cramped because there were a lot of people in the team, also I am a wheelchair user meaning my wheelchair takes up a lot of space. This could increase the temperature of the room which could have caused someone to faint – I would try to prevent this from happening by encouraging my team to take regular breaks.

ORGANISATION OF EQUIPMENT

The equipment for this project was provided by my school therefore it was my job to ensure that my teachers who were providing the equipment were aware of the dates, times and what I needed. I provided my teachers with booking forms as mentioned two weeks before filming and I also sent them an email reminding them about equipment two days prior to filming. A way in which I ensured that this was organised was by filling out an equipment booking form. It was also my job to download all my footage on to my hard drive before I returned the equipment on time. I ensured that I was aware of how to use the equipment so that I could set it up efficiently and successfully.

SCHEDULING

As part of the scheduling process I completed a call sheet for each of my locations and each day of filming. This made it clear which scenes were going to be filmed on each day and which actors needed to be present. It also included the time and date of the filming. The call sheet also included a contact list of all the cast and crew in order to ensure smooth communication should any issues arise that they might come up against. In terms of scheduling my cast and crew it was important that the dates that I planned suited everyone.

COMMUNICATION WITH CAST & CREW

The first step of communication is making sure that your cast and crew are happy to be involved. When the production process began it was important for my cast and crew to be familiar not only with the script but for the actors to become familiar with their characters and the characters' lives. I also communicated to my cast about their costume and what I envisioned their outfits to look like, by telephoning them a week after giving them the script to ensure they were familiar with what their costumes should look like. During the filming process I also gave directions to the cast and crew in order for them to understand what I

expected. I asked my main actor to appear more frightened and instructed my crew to follow the shot list. One shot where I needed to direct the cameraman was the shot where Molly was doing her make-up in the mirror, as I wanted to be looking in the mirror rather than directly at her. I also needed to make sure that my cast and crew were aware of the times when we were going to have breaks to ensure that they were aware that they were going to be able to take a break. Finding out the cast and crew's preferred food options was another job that I carried out, in case of any allergies or dietary requirements.

MONITORING PROCESS

One way I monitored my progress while filming was by ensuring that after each shot was filmed by the cameraman, I was shown the shot in order to ensure that I was happy with what was achieved. For example, the reoccurring shot of the close-up of the phone needed to be taken a few times because it was out of focus.

After I finished filming the whole project I uploaded the footage on to my computer at home to ensure that I was happy with what was filmed and I discovered that my clips were out of focus. I was not too disheartened as I had allocated time in my filming schedule for any reshoots that needed to take place, could do so on a chosen date. Once I had viewed the reshoots and was happy with what I got on this second day, they could be used for editing. This could also linked to contingency planning, as a plan had to put in place in the event that any complications or unforeseen circumstance should occur.

I reviewed the editing process by putting my shots on a timeline in Final Cut Pro in order and experimenting with different colour tones and sounds that were best suited for the film genre. The shots that I placed on the timeline were the best ones out of what was filmed. I then edited all my shots in order as a first draft and uploaded to my Weebly as a first cut. I then re-edited the footage as well as enhancing the colour tones and adding sounds that I felt wasn't a perfect fit. On my final cut I added the opening and closing credits to my film, making it appear more professional, and also added a letterbox. After I was happy with my finished product I then made a bloopers reel by placing some of the shots that were not up to scratch on a timeline and adding comedic music.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

I completed a contingency plan which stated the main things that could go wrong and how I would prevent them from affecting the filming process. For example, if one of the actors could not have been available due to an emergency. One way this would have been dealt with is by making sure that if this was to occur actors would be aware of how to contact me so as other arrangements could be made. Also if for any reason the camera didn't work I had planned to get another one from school and I would always carry a spare battery and spare light bulbs in case the lighting equipment failed or camera ran out of charge.

Another problem that could have occurred is that there was a possibility that I could lose some of my footage. The way in which I tried to prevent this, is by ensuring I saved it on a hard drive and computer after each day of editing and filming. I also planned extra days for filming just in case I was not satisfied with what I achieved on the day I had initially

scheduled to film. It was important that I made all my cast and crew aware of the extra days in order for them to be able to attend.

OBSTACLES

One difficulty that I faced was the organisation of actors and crew and ensuring that everyone was free on the same day. For example, I was scheduled to shoot during the day on a weekday but, my main actor was unable to attend until the evening. Another problem with filming during the day was that it would be too light meaning that the lighting wouldn't have suited the horror genre.

I also found it difficult to find a second location to use in the film, as when filming inside a property that is not yours, you are not fully in control of time and dates. For example, I was going to use my Nan's house but there was not available at a convenient time in order to meet the filming deadline.

A particular scene that I had difficulty with when filming was the bathroom scene as my wheelchair could not get in, meaning that my camera person had to shoot the scene and then show me the outcome to get my approval. This scene had to be shot several times before I thought it was perfect.

In some cases, the actors that I was going to use originally were not available so I needed to find somebody else to play the role. For example, I was going to use my Grandad to play the Pizza Delivery Man but he was not available so I found another actor to play the role. I managed to organise this quickly by asking other people I knew including people at my school. My private tutor was happy to take on the role of the pizza delivery man should it have become necessary.

The final thing that I found tricky when planning was maintaining continuity in my editing. For example, I needed to ensure that if one of my actors picked up her phone in her right hand then in the next shot she needs to be using the same hand. The way in which I maintained the continuity was that if I saw this mistake occur I would ask to reshoot the scene.

IMPROVEMENTS

One aspect of the production that I would improve on is ensuring that I continuously checked shots after they were taken to avoid needing reshoots which would take more time. Also, I would cast some actors differently to ensure that they were more reliable so that I didn't need to recast at the last minute.

In terms of shooting I would like to experiment with more complex shots. For example, possibly include a montage. I would use equipment more efficiently, for example I was provided with a Steadicam however I didn't use it to its full capacity. I could YouTube for any tips on how to use it or plan shots so that I know the appropriate times to use it.

In the very early stages of my planning I would have liked to have come up with a more complex idea which has a slightly more developed narrative. A way in which I could have planned this would have been to research other horror movies with a slightly more complex

narrative to provide me with some ideas. I could also further develop my characters by enabling the audience to find out more about their lives in the film.

One other way is to have a more complex musical score to fit the genre, however I am aware that in the short film I created this wouldn't necessarily be appropriate as I had *Scream* playing in the background which I used as intertextual reference. However, I would aspire to work on this in the future. Another way I would do this is creating my own musical score and recording it, making it more original. I could plan to work with a composer to make this possible.

The final improvement is that in the future I would like to experiment with locations, for example possibly filming in a basement as it's more suitable for the horror genre. I would manage this by scouting locations and choosing the one I think would be best, then calling the owner of this property and negotiating prices and availability.