

Greening a short film – Baby Gravy

Sustainable practice is achievable for productions of all sizes, including low-budget shorts and features, and can help productions save money by making better use of resources.

One of the 21 short films selected by Film London for its London Calling 2017 slate was *Baby Gravy*, the story of a same-sex couple awaiting the arrival of their sperm donor. Producer Michelle Antoniadis is passionate about sustainable working. She told us about her experience of implementing green production methods on the film.

Michelle says, **“Everyone got on board.”** By shooting in a single location, a roadside pub, the crew made **significant savings on travel costs by car sharing. They used catering and waste facilities on-site and brought reusable water carriers.** Each member of the cast and crew had their own refillable water bottle. Michelle had just three copies of the printed script on set at any time, printed on A5 to save paper. She introduced digital call sheets for everyone except the AD and Production Manager.

By using sustainable measures, the production saved £150 (€170) on catering, water bottles, petrol and printing costs, a significant amount for a short film.

Michelle has already started to plan how she will take her learning from *Baby Gravy* on to her first feature *Violets are Blue* (working title), selected for Film London’s Microwave programme. “The challenge is that it’s a road movie. We could do all the driving in one go. I want to monitor carbon footprint. It’s a low-budget feature but you can still be environmentally sustainable.” Shooting will start early in 2018.

She recently shared her enthusiasm for sustainable production in a Green Screen briefing for the next group of London Calling 2018 filmmakers.

Her advice to other low-budget filmmakers: **“You can definitely afford to do it. You just need to take the time. People think it’s an extra job, but it’s worth it in the end and it doesn’t take that long.** You just think of all the practices you do in pre-, production and post-, and figure out a way to make them as sustainable as possible. Break down every aspect of what you buy and use and how it’s packaged, and ask yourself if you really need it.”

In the UK, Film London asks all its funded productions to follow sustainable working practices. By registering on the UK platform www.green-screen.org.uk, productions can receive green tips for each department and achieve a Green Screen certificate.

