

NEWS: For immediate release



THE LONG CALL: BRISTOL HOSTED ALL INTERIOR FILMING FOR GRIPPING NEW ITV DRAMA FEATURING UK TV'S FIRST GAY DETECTIVE LEAD

BRISTOL, 3 November 2021: Since airing nightly last week, ITV's gripping new series **The Long Call** has been widely applauded for being the first British primetime drama to place a happily married gay detective at the centre of its story, and is now available for viewers to stream on the ITV Hub and BritBox. And although the four-parter is set in North Devon, interior filming for the 'whodunnit' in fact took place on location in Bristol, with support from the city's Film Office.



(L) Juliet Stevenson, Pearl Mackie, Ben Aldridge, Martin Shaw & Anita Dobson in *The Long Call*; (R) Ben Aldridge & Declan Bennett in scenes filmed in Bristol. (Images: ITV)

Production company Silverprint Pictures filmed at a range of locations across the city for three weeks in April and May 2021. Police station interiors were built in The Showroom, a film and TV build space situated on an old car dealership site on Bath Road. Other locations included The Old Stillage pub in Redfield, Museum Street near the harbourside, Royal York Crescent in Clifton, a private residence on Clifton Park Road, Paintworks Event Space in Brislington and Leigh Woods. Bristol Film Office assisted with permits and setting up unit bases around the city. Filming also took place in Portishead and Severn Beach before the shoot moved down to North Devon to film exterior shots in places like Barnstaple, Ilfracombe and Crow Point.

The Long Call Producer Angie Daniell, whose other credits include *Vigil* & *Alex Rider*, says: "What I love about shooting in Bristol is that for a relatively compact city it offers such a variety of locations. From a period private house in Clifton (a personal favourite as I could walk there from my accommodation) to a converted warehouse in Brislington. As our story was set in Devon, it was a bonus to be able to "cheat" the coast in Portishead and on Severn Beach. The shoot went very smoothly – it's definitely a film friendly place."

Actor Pearl Mackie is no stranger to Bristol, having studied drama at the University of Bristol and subsequently trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. She was last in the city in 2017 filming series ten of *Doctor Who* in Redcliffe Caves. Describing her return to the city to shoot *The Long Call*, she said: "It was quite surreal walking around the places where I'd spent five very vivid and sometimes challenging years of my life. I was offered a flat to stay in during filming which was quite near to The Old Vic and my old stomping ground, but I thought it would be better for my mindset to be somewhere totally different."

“In a way, although there was so much I’d loved about Bristol, I didn’t want to return to those days where there was so much grappling with who I was and what I wanted to be and how I was going to get there. Had I known back then how the career would have gone, including being cast as Bill Potts, Dr Who’s companion when Peter Capaldi was in the role, and a real game changer for me, I’d have been much more at peace with myself. There was an element of returning now to Bristol to film *The Long Call* where, without wanting to sound arrogant, I did feel really proud of myself for how far I’d come. I’d really have liked that girl back then to see me now!”



Declan Bennett & Juliet Stevenson in interior scenes filmed in Bristol (Images: ITV)

Directed by Lee Haven Jones (*Dr Who*, *Shetland*, *The Bay*) and adapted by Kelly Jones (*Des*, *Baptise*) from the best-selling novel of the same title from award-winning writer Ann Cleeves, *The Long Call* follows Detective Inspector Matthew Venn, played by Ben Aldridge (*Our Girl*, *Fleabag*), who has returned to live in a small community in North Devon with his husband, Jonathan (Declan Bennett). Matthew was brought up in the Barum Brethren before leaving to go to University. At 19 he knew he couldn’t continue amongst the community, hiding his sexuality, and to his mother’s shock and dismay, he declared publicly he no longer believed. Now he’s back, in the place where it all began, not just to grieve for his father, but to lead a shocking murder investigation. Matthew is forced to re-engage with the community he left, including the most painful and challenging relationship with his mother Dorothy, played by award-winning actress Juliet Stevenson (*Riviera*, *Truly Madly, Deeply*).

After the body of a man is found on the beach close to Matthew’s home, the investigation casts a shadow of doubt over the whole community. In order to expose the killer, Matthew and his team have to get to the bottom of a case which brings with it old wounds and a deadly secret. Pearl Mackie (*Doctor Who*) plays DS Jen Rafferty, a tough and fiercely determined woman who has recently relocated to Devon with her two teenage kids, Ella and Ben. As a diligent worker and a single parent, Jen muddles her way through domestic life whilst trying to put some distance between her own traumatic scars from her former life in London.

The Long Call is now available to stream on the ITV Hub and BritBox

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View *The Long Call* press pack here:

https://www.itv.com/presscentre/sites/default/files/itv_drama_the_long_call_press_pack.pdf

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Bottle Yard Studios

A Bristol City Council initiative, The Bottle Yard Studios is the largest dedicated studio facility in the West of England. Located in Bristol, an internationally recognised UNESCO City of Film, the Studios are at the heart of a thriving TV and film industry in one of the UK's most creative, film-friendly cities.

Eight stages are available for hire across our seven-acre site, plus three new stages coming online in 2022. Floor spaces of up to 22,000 sq ft and heights of up to 65ft, translate into endless opportunities for set builds. Add to this our 5,000 sq ft green screen, 20,000 sq ft of furnished production office space and all the ancillary workspaces a production could need - plus an onsite community of over 25 companies providing specialist film and TV services - and we've got everything you require for a fully supported shoot, whether it's drama, entertainment, comedy, children's, commercials, live transmission or OB.

Productions made at The Bottle Yard Studios include: The Pursuit of Love (BBC/Amazon), The Spanish Princess (Starz), The Salisbury Poisonings (BBC One), The Trial of Christine Keeler (BBC One), The Pale Horse (BBC One), McDonald & Dodds (ITV), Tipping Point/Tipping Point Lucky Stars (ITV), The Crystal Maze (Channel 4), The Crystal Maze US (Nickelodeon), Sanditon (ITV), 'Andy's Adventures' series (CBeebies), Fortitude (Sky Atlantic), Poldark (BBC One), Eric, Ernie & Me (BBC Four), Ill Behaviour (BBC Two), The Festival (Entertainment Film), Hellboy (Lionsgate), Three Girls (BBC One), The White Princess (Starz), Broadchurch (ITV), Trollied (Sky1), Crazyhead (E4/Netflix), Sherlock: The Abominable Bride (BBC One), The Living and the Dead (BBC One), Galavant (ABC Studios), Wolf Hall (BBC Two), The Lost Honour of Christopher Jefferies (ITV).

www.thebottleyard.com

Bristol Film Office

Bristol Film Office, a division of Bristol City Council, is a free service to all productions planning to film in the city. Dedicated to making film, television or commercial photography shoots run as smoothly as possible when on location in Bristol, it is the one-stop-shop for all filming enquiries. It can assist at all stages of production, from initial location and crewing advice to reccees and logistical support.

www.filmbristol.co.uk

Working with city partners, Bristol Film Office leads the programme of activity delivered under the permanent UNESCO City of Film status awarded to Bristol in 2017.

www.bristolcityoffilm.co.uk

The Bottle Yard Studios and Bristol Film Office are Bristol City Council initiatives.

