

Case study

Helping the second largest swift colony in the south find a safe haven

Former Hospital Site
Brighton

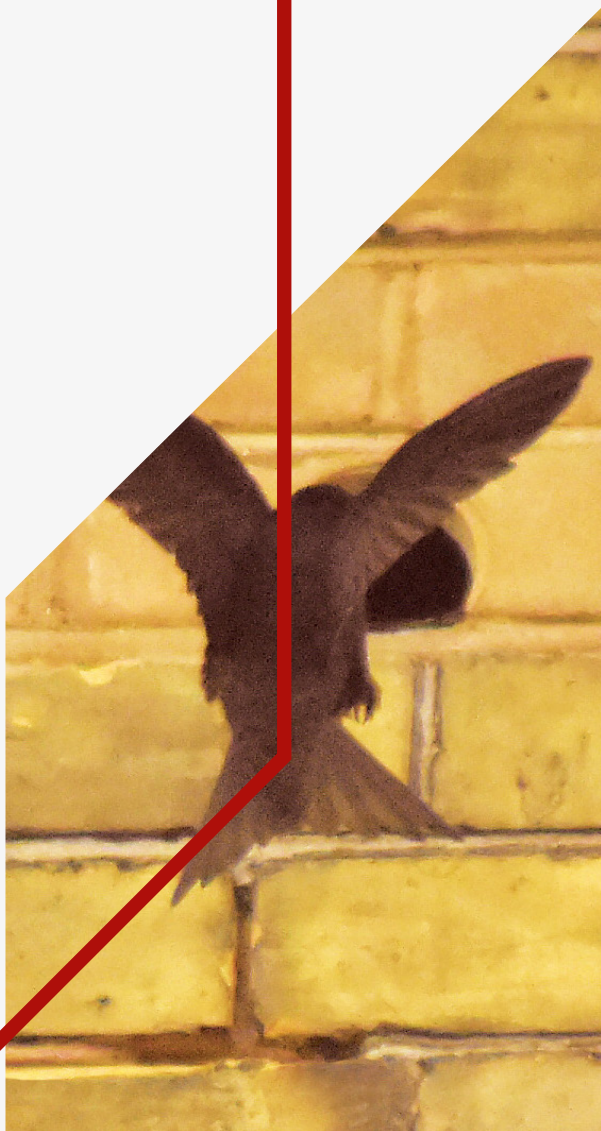
Product type
Habibat Swift Box

Client
Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust



The project

If you are looking for an example of the built environment providing a home for wildlife, then a former hospital site in Brighton would be a great place to start.



This project first started when £2m refurbishment works took place at the site and nurse Heather Ball first spotted the swifts. “BBC Spring Watch inspired me to keep a look out for the swifts,” said Swift Conservation Group (SCG) volunteer and member Heather. “If they hadn’t mentioned them, I wouldn’t have known. But after watching that programme, I heard the swifts’ calls and realised they were nesting in the building.”

It was later discovered that the colony, the second largest in the south of England, had resided at the site for some time, when local residents were able to confirm that the swifts have been active in the area for over half a century. The swifts were using old and decaying ventilator bricks and other gaps in walls as nesting holes, but any repairs made to the holes would have rendered them unusable for the swifts, so Heather realised action was required in order to provide them with a nesting site.

In order to help, Heather enlisted the assistance of her fellow volunteer, Chris Lowe, who runs the SCG, and the site’s owners to see what solution could be found.



The solution came in the form of Wienerberger Habitat Swift Boxes which were chosen to be installed ahead of ventilator bricks during the refurbishment. The boxes were retrofitted into the building, matching the existing brickwork as well as also conforming to British brick standards, meaning the boxes could seamlessly fit into the design of the building.

Several years after the successful installation, Brighton & Hove City Council announced that all new developments over five metres tall in the city now have to include habitats within their construction to house swifts. The project is now used as a flagship example of swift provision.

Credits

Project	Former Hospital Site
Site Location	Brighton
Client	Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust
Materials supplier	Wienerberger Habitat



Testimonial

“We wish that other building projects would take account of the needs of nesting birds like this. Simple measures such as using swift-friendly airbricks and putting up integral nest boxes can make all the difference to swift numbers.”

Richard Black

RSPB Conservation Projects Officer

**If you have any questions
about this project
please get in touch**



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