

London's Swifts

Information for Developers



Swifts are the UK's fastest bird, here only in Summer. They nest in buildings, in small holes in the eaves or upper walls. They feed on flying insects. They thrive in cities and towns, and fill the evening with their aerobatic flight and elfin calls. They are clean, exiting and add life and interest to any area. Their calls mean Summer is here.

Why they need your help Swifts rarely nest in post-1944 buildings, nor in refurbished older buildings, as they cannot gain access. But minor and economical modifications can assure their breeding success.

Why you should do it For a minimal cost and effort developers can preserve inner-city Swift populations, and animate and improve the local atmosphere. Just like flowers and trees, Swifts bring life to any site.

What you can do Installing permanent features that Swifts will nest in is easy. With no need for maintenance or cleaning, installed at minimal cost, a Swift

colony is a good option for introducing biodiversity to a site.

Examples of Good Practice

Local Authorities in West Sussex, Aylesbury and Camden are active in preserving and installing Swift nest places. In Europe, Zurich and Amsterdam have policies in place, backed by simple and effective legislation, preserving their Swift populations.

Three Easy Answers

1. Preserve existing eaves colonies by separating them from adjacent roofspaces with a ventilated plywood screen.
2. Build hollow eaves just for Swifts, with suitable small access holes.
3. Insert concrete "Swift Brick" nest boxes (as illustrated) into the walls at two storey height and above (but not in full sunlight!)



What it will cost Ready-made concrete Swift Bricks cost £22 each from Jacobi Jayne Ltd on 0800 072 0130. Pigeons cannot use them. You can install 10 for a 20x Swift colony suitable for a block of flats for just £220. Install Swift Bricks in a landmark development, and create a cultural feature that will give your building its own permanent signature.

Questions? Help is available

London's Swifts advises on nest-place location, design, and installation. We provide sketch plans, and specifications, source materials, and advise at site and planning meetings. Just ask and we will do our best to help you. Our advice is free.

Contacts See our website for useful information and contact us with any questions you may have or for help with your projects.

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