



# SWIFT CONSERVATION

KEEPING THE SKIES ALIVE

[www.swift-conservation.org](http://www.swift-conservation.org)

## Swift Nest Bricks – installation & suppliers



Swift Bricks installed by Notting Hill Housing Association / Barnet Council - simple, cost effective, neat

### What's great about Swifts?

- **Swifts are stunning** – the UK's fastest bird in level flight, faster than a Peregrine Falcon in a dive
- **They bring us the Sound of Summer** - their screaming calls & dashing flight are exciting, unique
- **They can live up the grimmest places** – they'll nest in the bleakest of urban concrete jungles
- **They've travelled so far to be with us** – they're only here for 12 weeks out of 52, spending the rest of the year in Africa over the Congo & Sahara
- **They're a technological marvel** – Swifts use the same high-tech aerodynamic technologies that engineers use for advanced aircraft designs
- **They've been with us for 49 million years** – let's make sure they stay with us!
- **They can eat up to 20,000 flying insects a day each** - many of them harmful or pests
- **They can help you get Planning Permission** - installing Swift Bricks can meet Planners requirements and gain you BREEAM points too

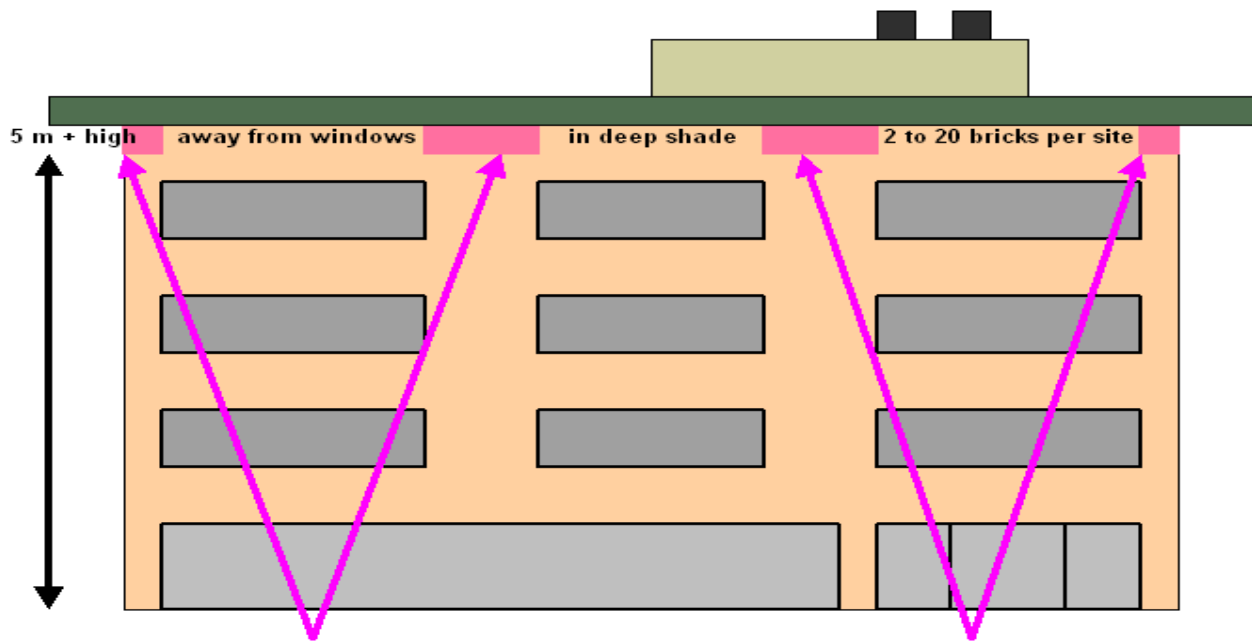
*and*

- **Swifts are the cleanest birds ever** – they rarely defecate in the nest & eat their chicks' droppings
- **They're so discreet** - you'll hardly know they are in the roof, nesting over your heads
- **Wildlife is good for us!** - it makes us happier and healthier

### Swift Nest Bricks – easy but choosing the right site is important

Swift nest bricks, hollow blocks sized to hold a nest, are an excellent way to provide Swifts with nesting opportunities. They should be fitted either on a side of the building that gets some shade during the day, or under an overhang or under the eaves, to give protection from heat, but not over windows or near to vents. They should be sited at least 5 metres above ground, with clear adjacent airspace so the Swifts can access them in high-speed direct flight (they usually fly straight in and out). Make sure that predators (cats, crows, magpies, squirrels, and rats) do not have easy access (e.g. by climbing up creepers or flying in from close perches). See the drawing below, and the photos at the end of the leaflet for guidance and examples.

## Where to Install your Swift Bricks



Install the Swift bricks under the roof, in the top course of blockwork, in shaded areas out of direct sunlight, (shown here as pink blocks) and away from windows. Swift Brick installations do not usually generate any problems with droppings, but the Swifts may be disturbed by people staring at them! Minimum height from the ground should be 5 metres, and the boxes should not be obstructed by trees, ladders or aerials.

## Choosing your “Swift Nest Brick” nest box

You can find a good range of Swift nest bricks illustrated below, with details of their suppliers, plus a brief summary of the various materials and types and their uses. Select the Swift nest brick that meets your needs, your budget, and your ability to fit it. The longer lasting the Swift nest brick and the more soundly it is fitted, the better it is for the Swifts.

## Fitting the Swift Nest Brick

Good nest bricks are made to give many years of useful service, and so installation and any fixings used must be equally long-lasting. They may also be fitted behind metal and timber cladding, in which case the manufacturer's advice on suitable fixing methods should be obtained.

## Keep yourself safe

Establish a safe system of work and follow scrupulously all safety advice before installing Swift nest bricks. Use the appropriate personal protective equipment required for the task.

## Checking use and maintenance

Swift nest places do not usually need any cleaning. Many Swift nest bricks, if competently installed do not need any maintenance. Where bricks with removable covers are used, there will be a need to regularly check those covers for integrity. We suggest this is done as part of the building's regular maintenance programme.

## How many

Swifts like a few neighbours and a busy Swift colony will be a powerful attraction to other Swifts to come in and nest. So fit at least two to twenty boxes on your site, taking into account its size. For a house, two boxes, for a school or office or warehouse project, ten to twenty.

## The Istock "Eco Home for Swifts" Brick clay and recycled plastic



Discrete and attractive terracotta box ideal for new and restored buildings  
Insert under eaves or in high walls - Terracotta & recycled plastic plank

Made to order - takes 10 to 14 days  
Available in smooth red, blue & cream clays Size 326mm x 140mm x 140mm  
Product code UNQ.SWIFT01 £POA

Istock Brick Ltd. Cattybrook Sales Office  
Almondsbury, Bristol BS32 4BX

Action for Swift's "S" Swift nest box  
Laser-cut Foamboard and brick



Revolutionary, light-weight, aesthetically attractive new Swift brick that replaces a single brick and can be laid easily and quickly by any bricklayer.

It comprises a laser-cut PVC foamboard nest chamber and a brick slip front and is one of the simplest and lightest nest bricks on the market.



[www.istock.com](http://www.istock.com)  
sales 0844 800 4575  
design advice 0844 800 4576  
technical services 0844 800 4577  
literature and samples 0844 800 4578



Simple and proven, (see photo below) this nest brick encourages Swifts and House Sparrows to nest in brick and rendered cavity walls.

It can be made to different brick sizes, cavity widths and brick facings; it includes a built-in nest form and it is available in left and right hand entrance versions.



The version of the "S" Brick for rendered walls



An occupied "S" Brick in Cambridgeshire

For full details on the "S" Swift Brick

Web: [actionforswifts.blogspot.com](http://actionforswifts.blogspot.com)

e-mail: [actionforswifts@gmail.com](mailto:actionforswifts@gmail.com)

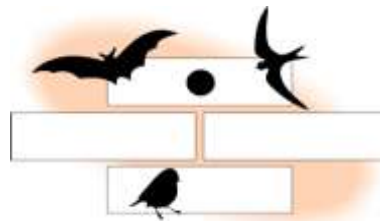
The Bird Brick Houses nest box  
Plastic and brick



This nest box is made out of plastic with a detachable plastic front frame holding your own brick or stone finish, made to your needs, and set into the wall.

This box can be supplied with various front panels permitting entry by Swifts or several other bird or bat species. It matches neatly into standard brick patterns, and even into flint walls.

Bird Brick Houses, The Old Parlour, Wilbees Farm,  
Arlington, E. Sussex, BN26 6RU



Tel: - 01323 488732

e-mail : [Enquiries@birdbrickhouses.co.uk](mailto:Enquiries@birdbrickhouses.co.uk)

Web site:  
<http://www.birdbrickhouses.co.uk/>



## Schwegler "Woodcrete" Bricks & Boxes of Cement-fibre compound

Swift nest bricks from Schwegler are made from a compound called "Woodcrete"

A mixture of cement and plant fibre, it is strong and long lasting, if heavy

Such boxes, if sensibly sited and maintained, have the potential to last as long as the building, making them particularly attractive and cost effective

<http://www.schwegler-natur.de/index.php?main=home>

UK suppliers: NHBS

Phone - 01803 865913 Prices on application

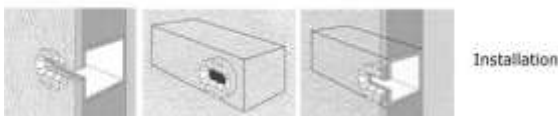
[customer.services@nhbs.com](mailto:customer.services@nhbs.com)

[http://www.nhbs.com/about/contact\\_us.php](http://www.nhbs.com/about/contact_us.php)

NHBS, 2-3 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5XN UK

On the right, the Schwegler Swift Brick No: 25 suitable for solid walls.

265mm wide x 220mm deep x 180mm high



Above, the Schwegler Lightweight Swift Box 1A designed for fitting into plastered and insulated walls. W 340mm x H 135mm x D 150mm (plus 17mm for the protruding entrance ring)



Schwegler make several designs of Swift nest box that can be sunk into the walls of brick or block built buildings, or bolted on to the surface.

The one illustrated to the left and above, the Swift & Bat Box 1MF, is their double box. There is also a single version



**WoodStone® Build-in Swift Nest Box**  
**Code 90068**



Made from a cement and wood fibre mixture this nest-brick is intended for insertion into walls at five metres or above from ground level, in an area providing clear air-space. This box can be opened for cleaning and/or checking in winter

W 33cm x H 19cm x D 16cm

Cement and wood fibre mix

Every WoodStone® nest box from CJ Wildlife is guaranteed for 10 years.

**WoodStone® Build-in Swift Box**  
**Code 90060**



Made from a cement and wood fibre mixture this nest-brick is intended for insertion into walls at five metres or above from ground level, in an area providing clear air-space. This box once fitted requires no further maintenance, and may be plastered over, leaving only the entrance hole visible.



**Sales:**  
**Tel: 0800 731 2820**  
**sales@birdfood.co.uk**  
[http://www.birdfood.co.uk/ctrl/node:169;page:87;/vivara\\_pro](http://www.birdfood.co.uk/ctrl/node:169;page:87;/vivara_pro)

W 31cm x H 17cm x D 17cm

Material Cement and wood fi

Every WoodStone® nest box from CJ Wildlife is guaranteed for 10 years.

## ***For current prices please contact the Suppliers direct***

### **Attracting the Swifts - using the Swift Calls CD**

It can take a while for Swifts to find a new nest place. But nest site occupation can be speeded up if a recording of Swifts' attraction calls is played to attract them. Full instructions plus CD and MP3 recordings of the calls are available from us - see below for contact details.

### **Do's & Don'ts – please tell the occupiers**

Do give the birds' peace and quiet and every chance to breed

If a bird falls from the nest and cannot fly, consult the Swift First Aid pages of our web site

**<http://www.swift-conservation.org/SwiftFirstAid.htm>**

Don't stand and stare at the nest box when the Swifts are around. It may put them off

Don't disturb the Swifts at any time - they may well desert the nest

Don't allow creepers or plants to encroach on the nest. They will give access to predators

### **Some examples**



**Antrim Public Library, Northern Ireland: Ibstock Swift bricks were used to bring life to this featureless wall**

**Swifts used the Antrim nest bricks in 2014**



**Eight Schwegler Swift Bricks were installed and hidden behind the plastered facade of the new Cullompton Library in Devon**

**The New Library at Cullompton - the Swift Bricks are scarcely visible but should bring some aerial life and action to this new site**





Two Schwegler Swift Bricks installed in the walls of the Maternity Unit at the Lister Hospital



The Lister Hospital at East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust Stevenage Hertfordshire



Left & below:

An example of Swift Bricks being used on a major project: the "Pelikan" construction site, built by GUNDLACH, in Hannover, Germany

80 Swift bricks were incorporated in the walls of this new development which will bring Swifts flying over this huge modern housing project



Further advice is available

See our web-site at [www.swift-conservation.org](http://www.swift-conservation.org)

or contact us at [mail@swift-conservation.org.uk](mailto:mail@swift-conservation.org.uk)

