

# UK HOUSE MARTIN SURVEY 2015

## SUMMARY INSTRUCTIONS



**Please bear in mind that you will be undertaking survey work in close proximity to private properties and recording information about birds nesting on these properties. The privacy of local residents should be respected at all times. Additional guidance for surveying in residential areas is provided at: [www.bto.org/hm-resources](http://www.bto.org/hm-resources)**

### RECCE VISIT (Mid to late May)

- Cover the whole of the 1-km square to:
  - check which areas contain suitable nesting habitat,
  - ask for access permission if required,
  - mark and number each colony **on the map** of the square.
- If colonies are on buildings that are bisected by the square boundary they should be included on the north or east boundary but not if they are on the south or west.
- Do not record anything on the **Colony Information** or **Visit Summary** forms.

A **colony** is defined as one or more nests on a single structure.

### VISIT 1 (1st – 24th June)

- Cover all areas of the square that contain suitable nesting habitat. In particular re-visit any colonies found during your recce visit and also mark and number any new colonies **on the map**.
- On the **Colony Information** form record information about all colonies breaking them down into separate rows in order to:
  - make counting easier at large colonies (e.g. nests on two different walls – useful information for us too),
  - separate different categories of nests,
  - separate artificial and natural nests on the same structure.
- Record the total number of complete nests and the number of those that are occupied. A colony could have zero occupied nests and zero complete nests (e.g. if all are still incomplete or if they have fallen down or been removed since the colony location was mapped).
- On the **Visit Summary** form, record the date, visit duration and weather details. Also estimate the square coverage, the number of adult birds seen (including those away from colonies). Record any observed nest deterrents.
- In dense urban areas, you may need to finish the visit on a different day no more than a week later). On the **Visit Summary** form tick the column labelled 'Visit split over more than one day' and record the date and weather details for the day on which most of the square was covered. The duration and estimates should be for the combined visit.

A **nest is occupied** if it is complete and you see (or hear) any of the following:

- an adult entering or leaving the nest
- young heard, or seen in the nest
- a pile of droppings that have clearly come from that nest this year.

### VISIT 2 (25th June – 19th July)

- Again cover all areas of the square that contain suitable nesting habitat. Map any new colonies found and record information about the colony and the number of occupied and complete nests.
- Re-visit any colonies found during your previous visits, and record the number of complete and occupied nests on the same **Colony Information** forms as you used for Visit 1.
- Complete the same estimates on the **Visit Summary** form as for Visit 1.

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## DEFINITIONS & CODES

**COLONY:** For the purposes of this survey, a colony is defined as one or more nests on a single structure.

### COMPLETE NEST

A complete nest is a nest with a fully built structure (apart from the entrance hole), which is therefore ready to be used for nesting. Artificial nests are always considered as complete nests, unless they are broken. *Note that complete nests that are being used by another species (e.g. House Sparrow) should be excluded from the total count as they are not available for House Martins to use.*

### OCCUPIED NEST

A nest should be counted as occupied if **it is complete and you see (or hear) any of the following evidence.**

- An adult House Martin entering or leaving the nest.
- Audible young heard, or young House Martins peeking out of the nest.
- A pile of droppings that have clearly originated from the nest during the current breeding season.

<b>BUILDING TYPE</b> <b>DET</b> = Detached <b>SEM</b> = Semi-detached <b>TER</b> = Terrace <b>BAR</b> = Barn <b>FAC</b> = Factory/industrial building <b>MUN</b> = Municipal building or similar (e.g. school, hospital) <b>WOR</b> = Church or place of worship <b>CLI</b> = Cliff or other natural nest site <b>BRI</b> = Bridge <b>OTH</b> = Other		<b>BUILDING AGE</b> <b>NEW</b> = since 1990 <b>MOD</b> = between 1945 and 1989 <b>MID</b> = between 1919 and 1944 <b>OLD</b> = before 1919 <b>UNK</b> = Unknown/Unspecified
<b>WALL SURFACE</b> <b>BK</b> = Brick <b>ST</b> = Stone <b>PD</b> = Pebbledash <b>WD</b> = Wood <b>PL</b> = PVC or equivalent <b>ML</b> = Metal <b>OT</b> = Other <b>UK</b> = Unknown/Unspecified	<b>SOFFIT TYPE</b> <b>PL</b> = PVC or equivalent <b>WD</b> = Wood <b>ML</b> = Metal <b>OT</b> = Other <b>UK</b> = Unknown/Unspecified	<b>NEST LOCATION</b> <b>EV</b> = Under eaves <b>GT</b> = At the top of a gable <b>GO</b> = Under a gable but not at the top <b>WI</b> = attached to a window or under a window ledge <b>DO</b> = within a doorway or porch <b>OT</b> = Other <b>UK</b> = Unknown/Unspecified

