



A CHALLENGING SWARM COLLECTION!

We received a nervous and anxious call to clear bees from an old Victorian mail box set in the wall of the churchyard at isolated village in Devon.

The swarm was well established with several combs already built. Access was not easy and the first problem was to get the box unlocked by the helpful Royal Mail postman.

With the door unlocked the combs had to be hand held and then cut with a long knife from the top. The combs were laid gently on a cloth and then tied into empty frames . A nucleus box was placed conveniently on a wall nearby.



The queen was found and run into the nuc box . Now it was easy. The post-box bees were smoked heavily and once all the combs were out and transferred the flying and disturbed bees soon located the queen and other bees in the box. They were left for a couple of hours and by early evening they were all in their new home ready to be taken away to their permanent site.

Two days later the nuc box was inspected. NO BEES! They didn't like the box or something else.

There are two ways to try to prevent recently hived bees absconding. Give them some nice brood from another colony or cover the entrance for a few days with queen excluder. Wise after the event!

