

Case Study

Pigeon guano removal



Client	Facilities management company
Sector	Commercial office
Location	West London

Background

Office workers complained of bad smells in their eight-storey office block, so the client called in SafeGroup to investigate. SafeGroup found the cause of the problem – dozens of pigeons had been using pipework leading to the office’s roof-top service area as a roost.

The Challenge

Pigeons are most likely to roost in areas away from potential predators where they are protected from wet and cold weather. This can make dealing with bird guano contamination difficult.

Also, because they only need a small opening to get into these spaces, beneath roof eaves and in attic areas, pigeon dropping contamination can remain undetected until it has become a serious problem.

In this case, access was relatively easy because there was a safe and secure roof to work from. At other times, SafeGroup guano clean-up teams must work at height from access platforms or in confined spaces. Both require specific work and safety procedures, personal protective equipment, and qualifications.

For this guano cleaning task, the location meant it was not possible to use a pressure washer to clean off the pigeon droppings. Therefore, they had to be removed by hand.



Before



After



Before



After

The Solution

The site was surveyed by an experienced SafeGroup works supervisor who drew up a risk assessment and method statement for the work. This was submitted to the client, a facilities management company, for approval.

A team of five cleaning operatives carried out the guano removal work. In accordance with the RAMS and a point of works risk assessment, they wore protective suits, gloves, goggles and masks throughout the operation.

First they scraped off as much loose bird droppings as they could. Then they used a chemical sanitising agent and cloths to scrub the pipes, walls and floor to remove the remaining pigeon guano residue.

Their work transformed the area affected and made sure that there would be no more complaints of bad smells caused by pigeon droppings again.

Advised by SafeGroup, the office block's FM provider could then take the action needed to secure the service area and ensure pigeons could no longer access the pipes.

Outcomes

- SafeGroup responded quickly, decisively, and safely.
- The pigeon guano was removed using a safe and effective system of work.
- The client received a comprehensive project report, including before and after images.
- SafeGroup advised the FM client on the measures needed to prevent further guano contamination.
- The FM provider's client was impressed with the speed of action and high quality outcome.



Before



After

Bird guano cleaning

6 reasons it's important

1. **Long-term building protection** – bird guano contains acids that damage building fabrics, including limestone.
2. **Reduced health risks** – pigeons carry seven diseases that can be transmitted to humans.
3. **Reduced safety risks** – bird droppings cause slip hazards, often in locations on buildings where safety is already of primary concern.
4. **Improved business efficiency** – keeping equipment and facilities clean supports a high quality environment that is easier for maintenance teams to work in.
5. **Improved amenity** – bird droppings are unpleasant and unsightly. Removing them enhances the wellbeing of staff and customers.
6. **Enhanced reputation** – clean building facades enhance business brands.



The SafeGroup advantage

- Rapid identification of bird guano problems and solutions.
- Experienced, trained, qualified and well-led operatives for a safe and high quality service.
- Access to a full range of bird pest control and proofing services to prevent further guano contamination.



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