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Media Release

Safe landing for Hamish Mackie ‘Swifts’ sculpture at the Dyson Cancer Centre

A crane was back in action at the Dyson Cancer Centre for one day only this spring, and one of the tasks included lifting a specially commissioned ‘Swifts’ sculpture into place. The artwork was created by internationally renowned sculptor Hamish Mackie, who was on site to oversee the careful installation of the 80 kilo bronze sculpture at the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH).

Hamish said: “It’s always a very special moment to see a sculpture leave the confines of my studio and settle safely in to a new home. ‘Swifts’ was specifically designed for the Dyson Cancer Centre, as a symbol of hope and optimism, and will form the focal point of a first floor courtyard.”

Exposed to the sky but surrounded by walls and glazing, these soaring swifts will oversee a calming and welcoming space for patients and their loved ones during inpatient stays and treatments.

The sculpture was commissioned by a generous supporter of the RUH’s charity RUHX, who was also on hand to welcome the ‘Swifts’ onto site.

Hamish explained: “We wanted to create a sculpture that would celebrate the life of a special loved one, and those of all the other patients at the Dyson Cancer Centre. A pair of dancing swifts in the sky seemed to hit exactly the right note.”

The sculpture rests on a limestone base, which was generously donated by Stoke Hill Mine, from a quarry just outside of Bath. Art at the Heart (AATH) is the RUH’s art and design charity and AATH manager Hetty Dupays who is overseeing the art and interior design of the centre said: “The plinth the ‘Swifts’ rests on is a piece of 150 million year old limestone, in the distinctive honey colour that Bath stone is so famous for.

“The Dyson Cancer Centre has been designed around a land, water and sky theme which incorporates natural light, external spaces, greenery and artwork, all of which are known to have a positive effect on healing and patient experience. This sculpture and plinth are a beautiful marriage of sky and land and together make a really special addition to this wonderful building.”

The stone plinth was prepared by Wells Cathedral Stonemasons in Cheddar, who kindly donated their time and expertise. The complex installation was overseen by construction partners Kier, who ensured the art work landed safely and the joining of sculpture and plinth went without a hitch.

Work to build the Dyson Cancer Centre began on the RUH Combe Park site in summer 2021. The ‘Swifts’ sculpture will now be covered and protected while the courtyard landscaping takes place, ready for welcoming patients at the end of the year when the Dyson Cancer Centre opens.

The centre will provide a cancer services hub for half a million people in the South West, bringing together the majority of cancer services from across the RUH under one roof, including research, oncology, chemotherapy and radiotherapy services and a 22-bed inpatient ward.

More information about the Dyson Cancer Centre and the latest progress updates can be found here: www.ruh.nhs.uk/dysoncancercentre.

Footage of the ‘Swifts’ arrival can be seen here: https://youtu.be/t4y_IDjAbk

Ends

Notes to Editor:

Hamish Mackie – Hamish Mackie has works in public and private collections around the world. His sculptures are cast into bronze, silver or stainless steel as limited editions. He is experienced in working collaboratively with clients, architects, developers, interior designers and landscape designer. <https://hamishmackie.com/>

Art at the Heart - Art at the Heart supports the RUH Bath with an art and design programme that stimulates healing and well-being and creates an uplifting environment for patients, visitors and staff.

At the RUH we're proud to put people at the heart of what we do, striving to create an environment where everyone matters. Everyone means the people we care for, the people we work with and the people in our community.

We provide a wide range of services including medicine and surgery, services for women and children, accident and emergency services, and diagnostic and clinical support services.

We also provide specialist services for rheumatology, chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome/ME via the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases which we acquired in 2015.

In 2021, we acquired Sulis Hospital Bath, an independent hospital that provides care for both private and NHS patients. This has enabled us to provide more care for NHS patients, as well as continuing to provide private care to those who choose it. Any additional income earned through private care is reinvested in services for the benefit of the people we care for at both Sulis and the RUH.



Royal United Hospitals Bath

NHS Foundation Trust

We're currently building a new Cancer Centre at the RUH. The Dyson Cancer Centre, which is set to open in autumn 2023, will help transform the care we provide for patients, families and carers.

We work closely with other health and care organisations as members of the Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board. We strive to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in our community by working together build one of the healthiest places to live and work.

We are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

For more information about the Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust visit: www.ruh.nhs.uk