

Helping Swifts return to Buriton

Swifts are the UK's fastest birds and their exciting, aerobatic, screeching flights over Buriton are always a sign that summer has arrived.

But swifts are in trouble as changes are made to buildings which block up or remove their nest sites: new soffits, re-roofing, extra insulation etc.

The swift population has halved in the last 20 years.

Fitting a nest box to your home can help these beautiful and charismatic birds – and the Parish Council has arranged for a local charitable organisation, the Hampshire Swifts Group, to come to the village in the new year to fit dozens of boxes: for only £35 each (including installation).

Some fascinating facts:

- Swifts spend nearly all their lives flying
- They catch all their food and even collect nesting material in flight
- Each year in the early summer, swifts fly from Africa to breed here, returning to Africa in August
- Swifts pair for life with the male and female meeting every year at their nest site
- The same nest is re-used year after year
- When chicks fledge they may well spend the next three years without ever touching land
- They often live about 20 years and can fly well over a million miles.



The Hampshire Swifts Charity says "If we are going to save our Swifts in villages like Buriton we need to be getting lots of boxes up. Swifts are communal birds so if anyone wants more than one box, that's great."

