

Ludlow Swift Group 2016

Introduction. 2015 proved to be a disappointing year for the swifts breeding in Ludlow. However, it is important to realise that this is often the case with populations of birds. For reasons we frequently don't understand a good breeding season may be followed by a poorer one. However, the opposite is equally likely so the group re looking forward to 2016 with an equal measure of enthusiasm.

Events. As usual we are going to hold our events to welcome the swifts back to Ludlow in early May. The idea is to make everyone aware that the season has begun and to re-enthuse everyone for a concentrated effort to look for active nests over the all-to-brief 3 months that the birds are with us. For 2016 we have decided to have a stall at the Green Festival on Bank Holiday weekend as a debrief of the season to let people know how things have gone.

On Thursday 12th May we will have our annual stall at the local to Ludlow Market between 9am and 2 pm. Please do come and say hello and talk about our plans. New recorders are always welcome. On the following weekend evenings. The 14/15th May from 6 .30 pm we will be on the balcony of the Charlton Arms by the river at Ludford. [access for pedestrians will be fine, even if the bridge is still out of action to traffic!] Again, all out welcome to join us and hopefully see as many swifts as we did last year.

Recording nest sites We feel that we have quite a good handle on the birds that nest in the main areas of town like Mill Street, Raven Lane, the old Woodyard, St Mary's and several others so this year we will monitor these areas less intensely. In years gone by the Sandpits area of town was well known for its large colony and, this year, we want to concentrate on mapping the extent of that colony now. The particular house design adopted there was very 'swift-friendly' but, over the years, renovation and improvement has resulted in sites being lost. We hope to introduce a small number of nest boxes close to existing sites to see if we can encourage an increase in colony size.

House renovation We will continue to monitor planning applications within the town to ensure that no actual or potential nest sites are affected. One member of the group is responsible for tis and lodges objections where necessary. This results in planning conditions being attached to either protect or replace existing [and potential] sites

Schools We hope to visit the primary schools in town again this year to continue to enthuse the future citizens of Ludlow to become involved and to become the future members of Ludlow Swift group.

Finally. Please do come to our events and, even better, join us in the work we do on some of our lovely summer evenings. Dates and times of evening meets will be available at all our events in the 'Welcome Week'!