



The Supporter

Newsletter for Lewes Swift Supporters

July 2025

Dear Swift Supporters,

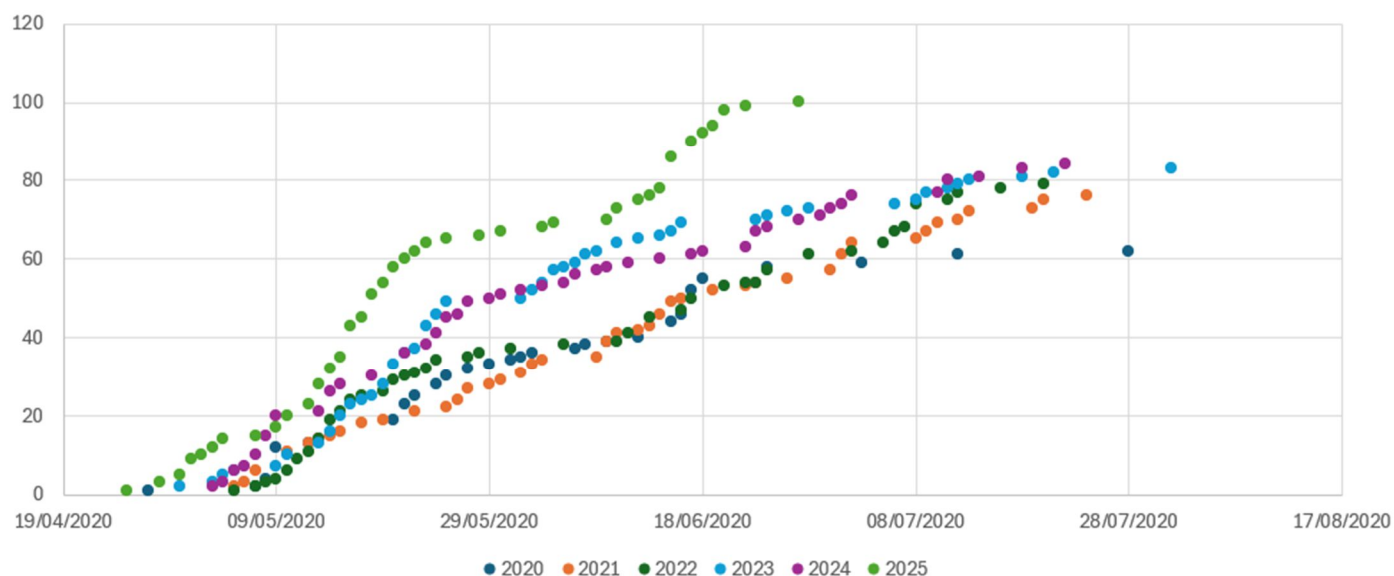
Swift update

There was a bit of a lull in Swift activity at the beginning of June, with surveyors reporting rather quiet evenings. The strong winds and changeable weather perhaps contributed to this, and the possibility that 50% of the successfully breeding Swifts could have been taking their turn in incubating the eggs in their nest. In later June, some extremely hot, still evenings and the return of some of the younger, non-breeding, birds made for very exciting Swift surveys, with lots of bangs from prospecting Swifts and some wonderful screaming fly-pasts! **We have now recorded 100 occupied nests!**

Swift site/colony	Number of occupied nests recorded
Upper Western Road	5
Rear of Western Road, (RSPB box)	1
St. Anne's Church	20
Valence Road, (two in a double Peak box)	4
High Street	1
Top of St. Swithun's Lane, (rear of High Street)	12
Grange Road	1
The Maltings	8
Castle Precincts, (opposite The Maltings)	1
Market Lane	2
Gallows Bank, Abinger Place	5
St. John's Terrace, (one in a Swift box)	2
King Henry's Road	3
St. Martin's Lane	3
De Montfort Road, (1 x Woodcrete box and 3 x Peak Boxes)	4
Station Street	5
The Avenue	5
Mealla Close	3
Southover High Street	3
Flea Market	3
Potter's Lane	2
Rotten Row, (in double Peak box)	2
Westfield House, Western Road	1
Bridgewick Close, Malling	3
Anne of Cleves House	1

Kevin has updated the graph, below, which compares numbers of Swift nests recorded by LSS over the past few years. It shows how many more nests we have confirmed this year! Thank you to all our surveyors and Swift Watchers for their valuable contributions to our records.

Graph 2020 - 2025



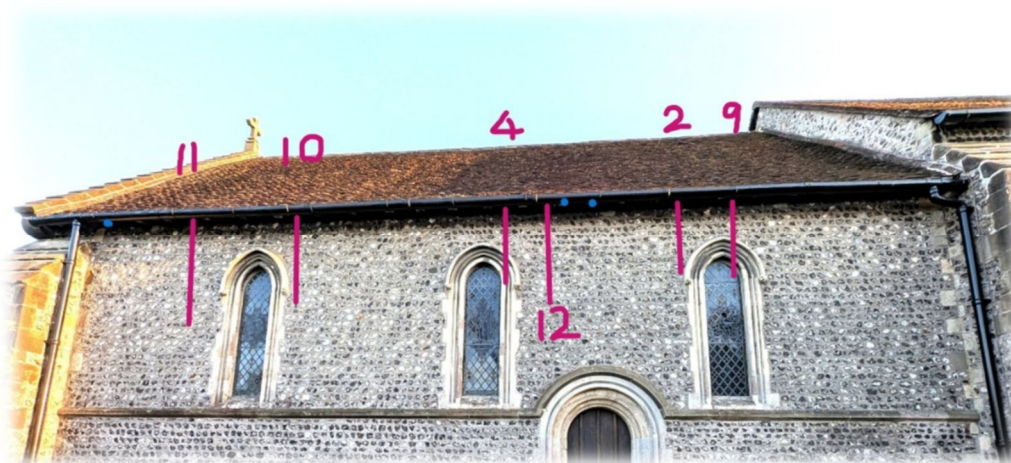
Some of our Swift colonies



Top of St. Swithun's Lane



Gallows Bank, Abinger Place



Eastern end of the front of St. Anne's Church



Western end of the front of St. Anne's Church

Twenty nests at St. Anne's Church surpasses our record of nineteen nests in 2020!
Mike Helps recorded that thirty pairs were nesting there in 2000 – wouldn't that be marvellous?



Station Street



The Maltings



Rear of Anne of Cleves House

Thank you to Diana Freestone, a volunteer gardener at Anne of Cleves House, for arranging to meet with some of the Southover surveyors so that they could find out if any of the nests previously occupied were being visited this year. They saw an entry to one nest there – which brought our total up to 100!

Nest box update

On 18th June, a very hot day indeed, Audrey and Nick Jarvis met with Dave Boddington, (Swift Champion for Sussex Ornithological Society) to install nine Swift nest boxes and two House Martin cups around Lewes.



Bradford Road



Talbot Terrace



Prince Edward's Road

Since we started up in 2019, we have installed 142 single nest boxes, 53 double nest boxes, and one triple nest box, making a total of 251 potential breeding spaces available for Swifts in the future!

Thinking of installing a Swift box or House Martin cup at your home?

Do get in touch with us with an email to lewesswifts@gmail.com if you are interested in installing a Swift box or an artificial House Martin cup at your home. We are delighted that our Swifts appear to have begun to accept nest boxes as a suitable alternative to the nooks and crannies under the eaves of buildings that they traditionally use. This year, we have recorded entries and exits to twelve of the boxes installed by us or by residents following our advice, in De Montfort Road, Rotten Row, Southover High, Western Road, St. John's Terrace and Valence Road.

Do you know of any occupied Swifts nest boxes?

Dave Boddington is compiling data about the occupancy of Swift nest boxes. We have some results to share with him through our surveys, but it would be very useful to hear of any entries that you have seen – **by Swifts, Sparrows, Great Tits, Starlings, Wrens, or any other birds!**

When we are installing boxes, we always ask residents not to worry if Sparrows start using their box. Their presence can help the Swifts to notice the boxes – and Sparrows need our help too! The double Peak box installed in Valence Road in 2021 was occupied by Sparrows in every year since then. Prospecting Swifts banged against it last year and several times this year - and Swifts finally entered both sides of the box on 13th June.



Sparrows in April 2021



Swifts in June 2025

In St. John's Terrace, Supporter Nick installed a nest box at the rear of his house in 2022, and it was occupied by Sparrows the next year. We were thrilled when he contacted us to let us know that the Swifts had settled in his box this year!

We install boxes throughout the year as soon as we have a confirmed list of five or more people with a suitable site, so you do not need to wait until next Swift season to contact us!

Swift walks 2025

We held our annual Swifts Walks a little earlier this year and, luckily, they coincided with some very pleasant Swift watching weather! It was lovely to meet up with some familiar Supporters and new people to share the delight of Swifts.



Market Lane



The Maltings



St. Swithun's Lane



St. Anne's Church



Western Road

Get in touch or follow us:

- Email: lewesswifts@gmail.com
- Facebook: Lewes Swift Supporters
- X: @LewesSwifts
- Instagram: @lewesswifts
- BlueSky: @lewesswifts.bky.social
- Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/lewesswiftsupporters/>



Swift over the meadows by Carl Bovis

Spread the Word!

If you have a friend or relation who might be interested in helping Swifts or learning more about them, please do share this newsletter with them. The more people who know and care about Swifts, the better their prospects will be!

With best wishes from the LSS Committee:

Mike Ramsey, Chairperson and Surveyor
Kevin Murphy, Recorder and Surveyor
Sharon Hall, Treasurer
Crispin Holloway, Founder Member
Audrey Jarvis, Secretary, Surveyor and Communications



Two chicks in one of the nests at King Henry's Road, 23.6.25