



Save Our Suffolk Swifts

(and elsewhere too!)

Edward Jackson



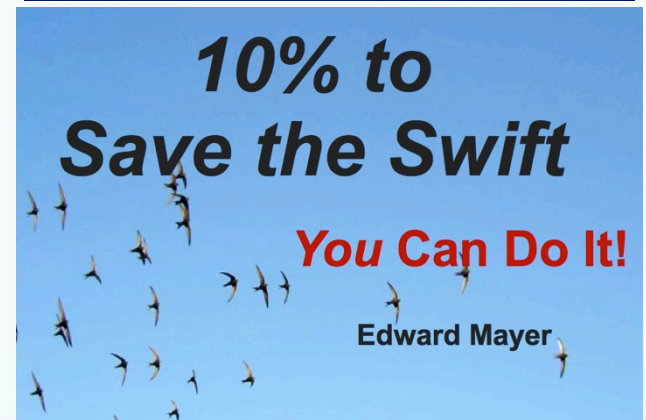
**Edward is a lead volunteer with
SOS Swifts - a project jointly
managed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust
and Suffolk Ornithologists' Group**



For the 2015 Seminar,
SOS Swifts arranged for
Edward Mayer to highlight
issues affecting Swifts
across the UK

To arrest significant
population declines we need
to ensure at least 10% of the
UK building stock can support
nesting sites for Swifts

This 2016 update is a reminder of why Swifts
need our help and gives practical advice for
Ecologists and Planners



Swifts are amazing birds!

**Except when nesting,
they are adapted to an
exclusively aerial
lifestyle, feeding
sleeping and even
mating on the wing**

**For successful breeding
they need suitable
nest sites and insect-
rich feeding areas
locally to fly over**



Bill Baston

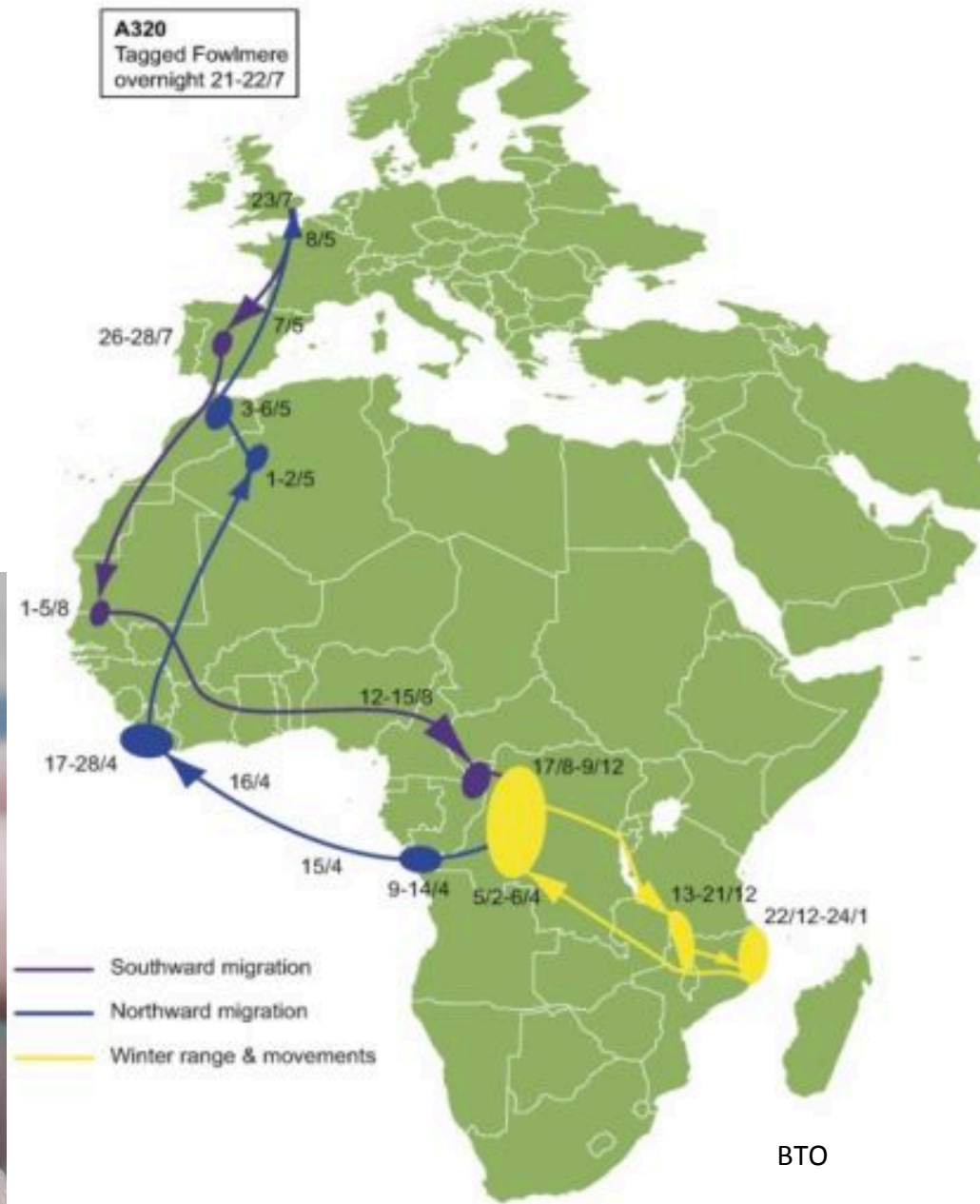


Graham Catley

**Recent studies using
geolocators have
revealed their
migration routes
between the UK and
Africa in more detail**



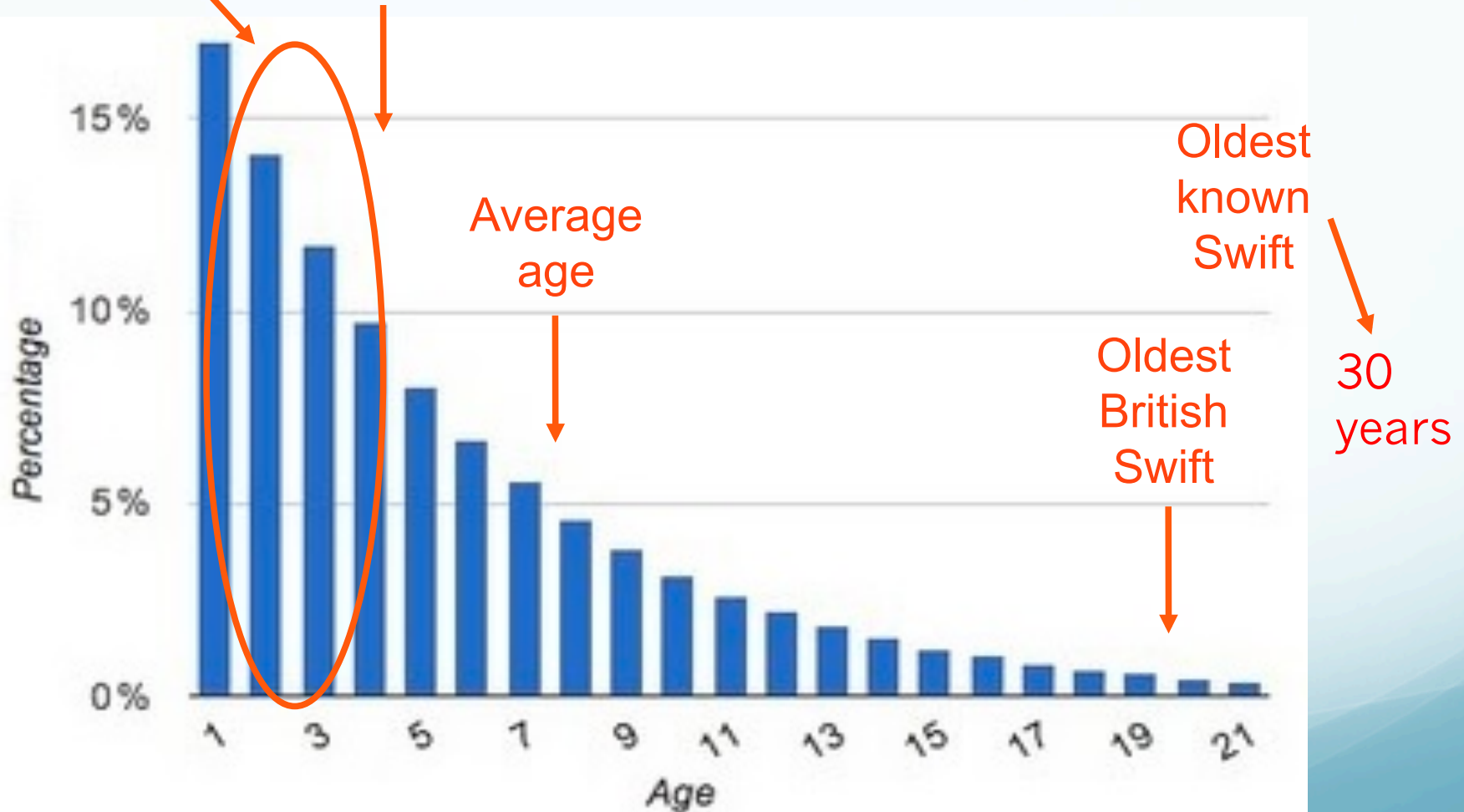
migratetech.co.uk



Long-lived birds, Swifts do not breed until their 3rd or 4th calendar year

Non breeders

Age of 1st breeding



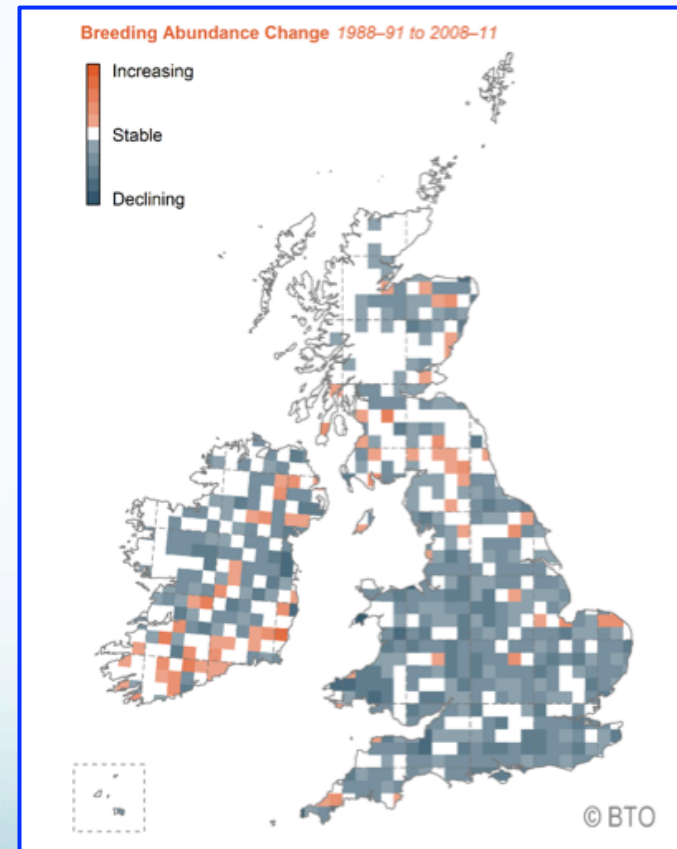
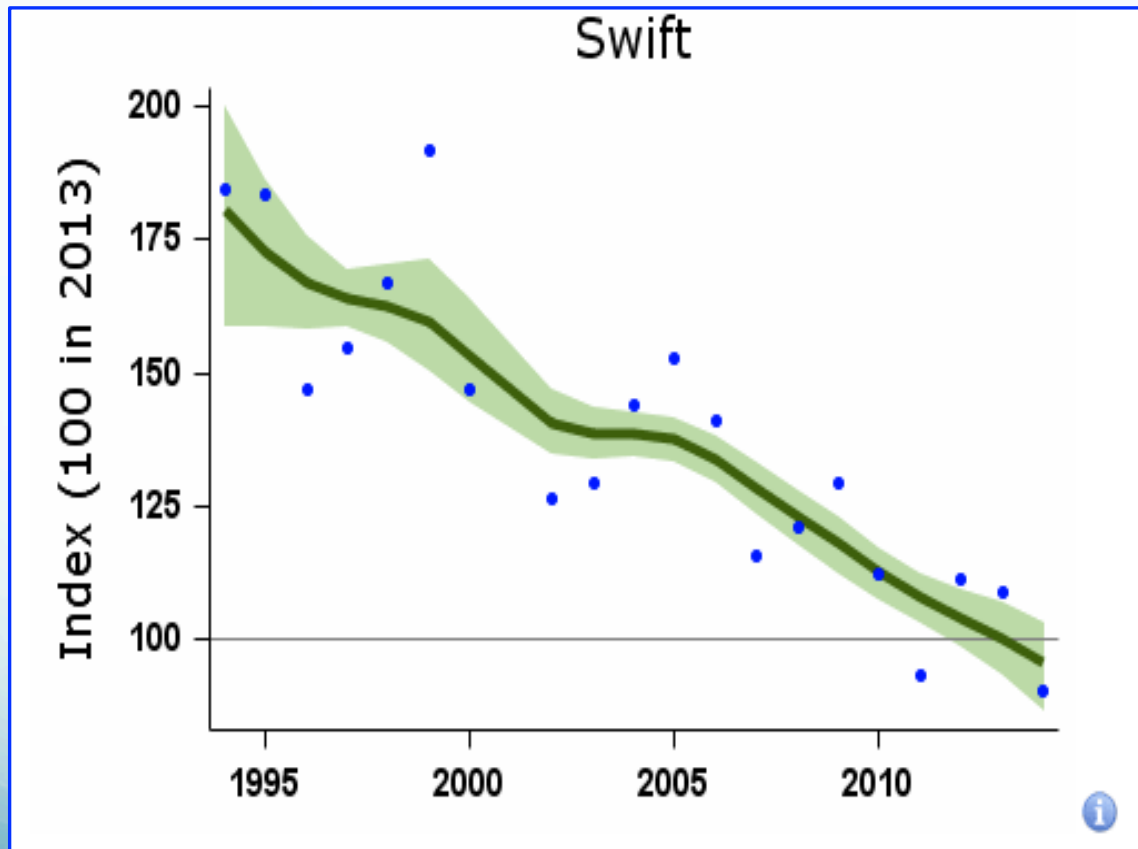
**Some Swifts still use
crevices in cliffs as
natural nesting sites...**



**..but the majority of the
UK population is now
totally reliant on the
availability of suitable
nest sites in buildings
of all types**



BTO Breeding Bird Survey and BTO Bird Atlas 2008-2011 both document declines of over 45% in the Swift breeding population across the UK in the past 25 years



Conservation Status

Although technically still an **Amber List** *Bird of Conservation Concern* in the most recent JNCC 2015 update, the evidence strongly suggests that it could move to the **Red List** within the next 5 years....

...but taking action now would address this decline

Swift is designated as a **Suffolk Character Species**, so is in effect a **Suffolk Priority Species**

Older buildings are more likely to have nesting spaces under the eaves

Long-standing nest sites in buildings are often inadvertently lost as owners improve their properties

Buildings demolished in the breeding season (May to July) can lead to significant mortality of juveniles



**Ecologists and Planners
can help Swifts by:**

**Searching for Swift data on
the SBIS Priority Species
database and/or GIS layers**

**Undertaking or requesting
nest site surveys**

**This information assists in
Protecting existing
nest sites**

and

**Applying planning
conditions for
new nest sites**




SOS Swifts has helped to set up a dedicated **Suffolk Swift Survey** on the SBIS website to collect up-to-date records of 'screaming parties' and nest sites

These data are included in the six-monthly SBIS updates to Planning Departments and are available to Ecologists requesting searches for prospective development sites

Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service

Swift Survey - Homepage www.suffolkbis.org.uk/swift

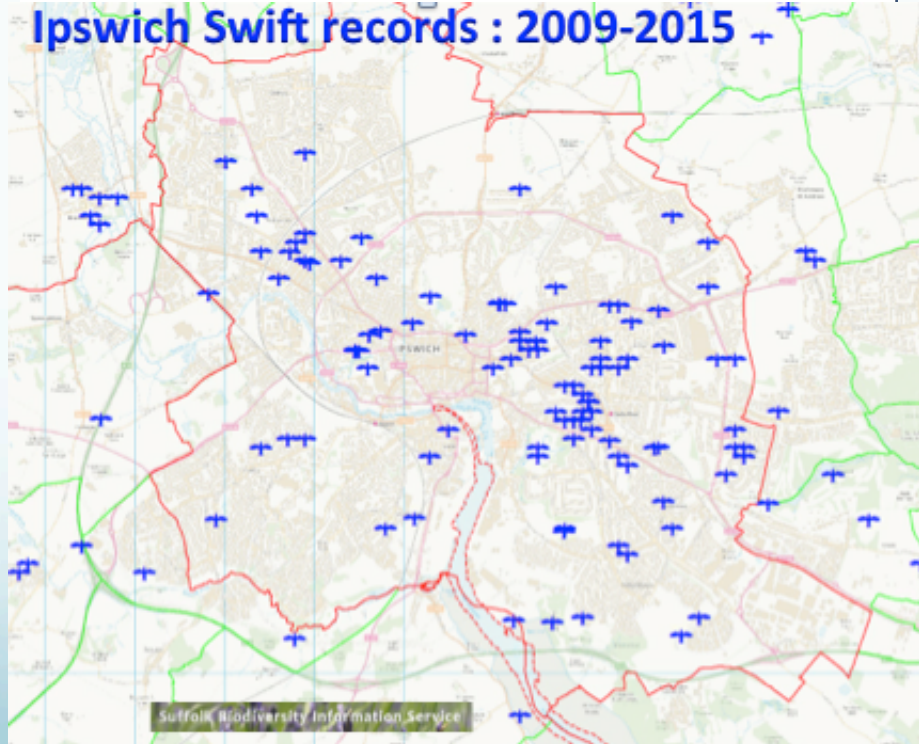


Welcome to the Suffolk Wildlife Trust & Suffolk Ornithological Group Swift Survey hosted by Suffolk Biological Recording Online (Suffolk BRO). From here you can access recording forms to log sightings of screaming parties or known nest sites. To get started please select one of the options below.

If you have a Suffolk BRO account you can log in with your account details (or join) below. For more information about SuffolkBRO please [click here](#).

[Click Here to Record a Screaming Party of Swifts](#) [Click Here to Record a Known Swift Nest Site or Nest Box](#)

Ipswich Swift records : 2009-2015

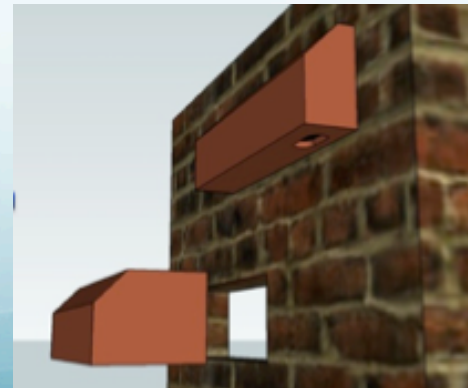
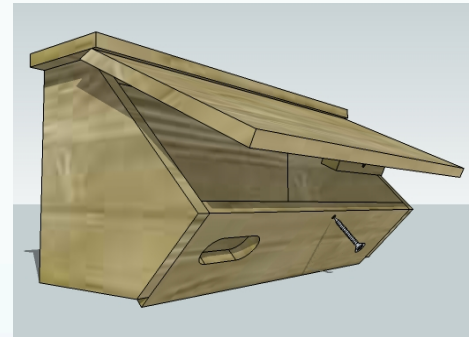


Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service

General householder improvements fall outside the remit of the planning system and **SOS Swifts is working hard to raise public awareness to reduce loss of nest sites for these reasons**

However Planners can also be proactive in helping Swifts by including specific conditions in Consent Notices

A wide range of external Swift nest boxes and retro-fitted internal boxes are available for applications involving single or small-scale projects and extensions

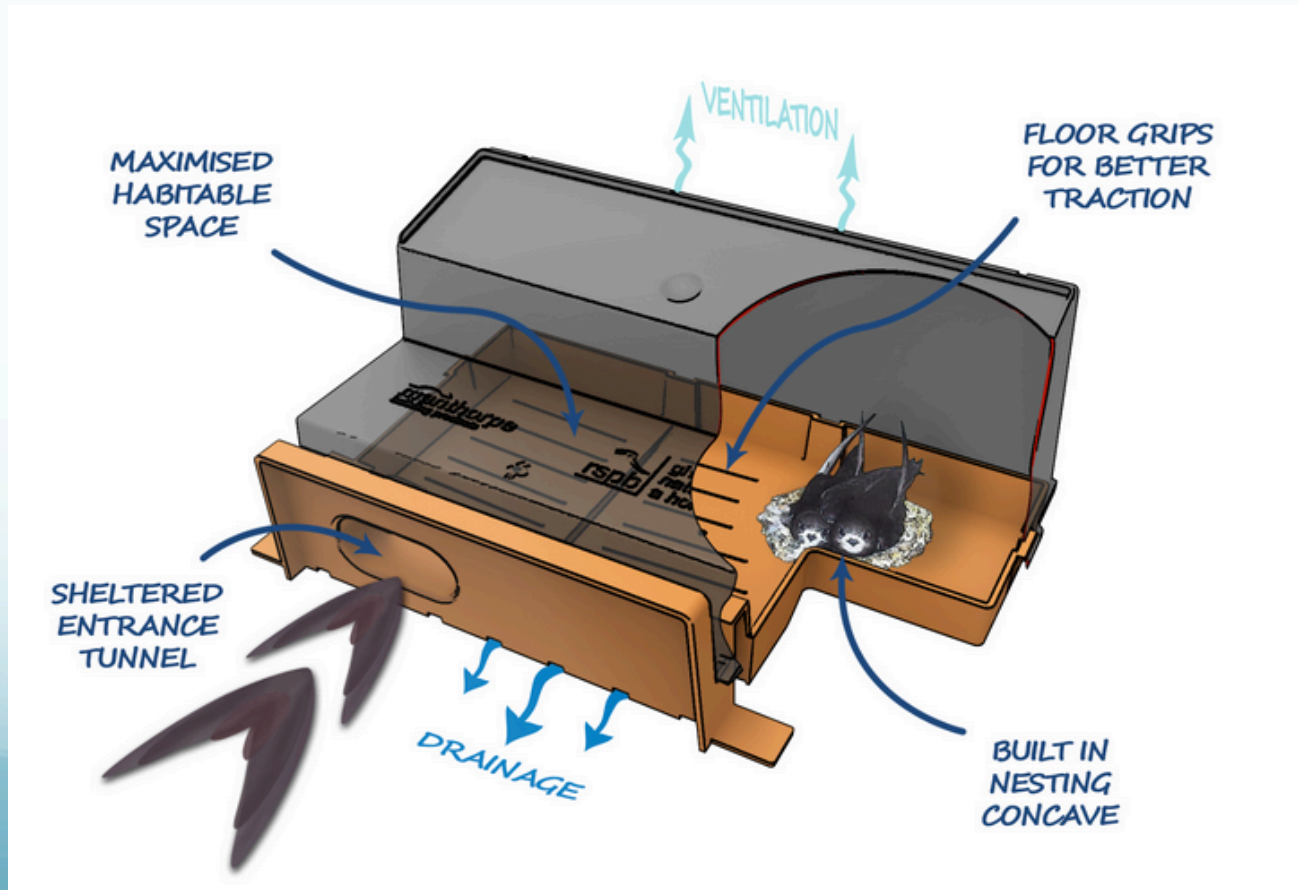


The greatest positive impacts are made via Planning Conditions which specify Swift nest boxes integrated into new builds

There is an increasing range of integral Swift nest boxes that can be conditioned for use in larger-scale and strategic building projects.



The new Manthorpe Swift brick has been developed jointly by RSPB, Barratt Developments and Dick Newell at *Action for Swifts* - it is simple to build into a gable wall alongside the loft space and other developers are also showing interest in the concept and product



**Suitable nest sites for Swifts need to be maintained
in at least **10%** of the UK building stock
Integrating Swift bricks into **100%** of all new builds
would go a long way to achieving this objective**



**Babergh/Mid-Suffolk DC has recently conditioned Swift
boxes for a 40 home development in Long Melford**



**For further advice and information please email
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