

## MOTIONS TO COUNCIL – MOTION TEMPLATE

<b>Date of Council Meeting</b>	26 October 2023
<b>Title of Motion</b>	Inclusion of swift bricks in new buildings to protect wildlife
<b>Proposer</b>	Councillor Lindsey Green
<b>Seconder</b>	Councillor Haydn Jones
<b>Recommendation for Council to vote on</b>	<p>Council resolves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To require all new building to have swift bricks</li> <li>• To require any renovation works to include swift bricks</li> <li>• Implement swift bricks into our own Local Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Context for the motion (i.e. why is the motion being submitted – what is the proposer aiming to achieve)</b>	<p>Common swifts are in perilous decline in the UK. There has been a downward trajectory, with numbers falling by 57% as recorded by The British Trust for Ornithology.</p> <p>Insect decline can be attributed to this along with the loss of nesting sites from where building was once permeable to a wide range of wildlife, from bats, bees, sparrows, and swifts.</p> <p>Nesting boxes are being installed around the country on some buildings but replacing nest holes that have been blocked over a period of decade do require a strategic approach.</p> <p>This is where swift bricks can come in. They are hollow, rectangular boxes made of a breathable material. Integrating these into walls will not compromise insulation and the only part visible is a small entry hole.</p> <p>House sparrows, starlings and swifts are all at risk because the holes they once used are disappearing. Swift/nest bricks are inexpensive and need minimal maintenance.</p> <p>As this council has committed to increasing biodiversity and championing nature from the motion at last full council meeting from Cllr Layfield and Cllr Turner, this will be the natural next step to make sure we are playing our part in protecting our wildlife.</p>
<b>Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect</b>	Strategic Planning and Development Management Environmental Protection

<b>the District – please confirm how this criteria is met</b>	
<b>Which Council Plan Priority does the Motion support? (select all that apply)</b>	
Environment and Climate Change – Protecting our environment and leading the district to carbon neutrality in 2030	
<b>Does the motion have potential financial or resource implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
Unknown	
<b>Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
Unknown	
<b>Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be</b>	
Yes	
<b>Are there any equalities impacts associated with the motion? If yes an equalities impact assessment will be required</b>	
No	
<b>Does the motion require further background information to enable the Council to make a decision– if yes advise what might be required</b>	
No	

## OFFICER IMPLICATIONS

<b>Officer Name</b>	Rebecca Charley
<b>Officer Title</b>	Strategic Lead – Nature Recovery and Biodiversity
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	rebecca.charley@stroud.gov.uk
<b>Has the Council or is the Council doing any work at the current time in relation to this motion or any associated issues? If yes please add details</b>	
Not specifically in relation to a blanket policy on swift bricks	
<b>Does the motion support any of the priorities set out in the Council Plan?</b>	
Yes - Environment and Climate Change – Protecting our environment and leading the district to carbon neutrality in 2030	
<b>Does the motion have potential financial or resource implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be and confirm whether budget is available</b>	

Yes, this will have resource implications (time taken for the planning officers to deal with the policy) for the following reasons.  
We don't have a planning policy basis for a blanket provision on all developments, but we do look to apply it where appropriate i.e. evidence based case by case.  
A blanket approach would not meet the tests for conditions, and we would risk an appeal which could undermine wider efforts.  
You would also get swift boxes put in the wrong place so they would not be used and could reduce the buy in from residents about the ecological enhancement generally.

**Does the motion have potential legal or constitutional implications for the Council – if yes advise what these might be**

There are no current opportunities to imbed a new policy into our new Local Plan, however this may change should the Plan be withdrawn.

At present any new 'policy' on swift bricks would need to be actioned via the use of a condition which would put the council at risk or appeal of legal challenge as the use of a blanket approach is likely to fail the necessary legal tests for planning conditions.

**Are there any Environmental or Climate Change Implications that the Council should be aware of – if yes advise what these might be**

This motion does seek to support the councils position regarding nature and biodiversity, however for the reasons set out it would be exceptionally difficult to implement.

**Should an equality impact assessment be completed before the deliberation of this motion?**

No

**Does the motion require further background information to be carried out to enable the Council to make a decision – if so advised what might be required**

No

END