

The Whixall Barn Owl Project – A Success Story

Apart from developing our own nestbox scheme, SBOG is often called on to work in partnership with others to develop nestbox programmes. One such project began in 2007 when the Parish Environmental Action Project, funded by Shropshire County Council Countryside Service, invited us to install barn owl nestboxes in the parish of Whixall and provide guidance on the best locations for the nestboxes.

SBOG helped install 11 nestboxes for the project in 2007. At that time we had no records of barn owls breeding within the targeted area but in the first year of monitoring in 2008 two boxes were occupied by breeding pairs and one was used for roosting. In 2009 one nestbox was used for breeding purposes and another for roosting. By 2010, twenty-eight nestboxes were in place and the number of nestboxes occupied by breeding pairs of barn owl had risen to four with a total of 13 young barn owls produced in the three years.



This exemplifies just how effective the careful siting of nestboxes can be in designated areas of good barn owl habitat and how much can be achieved when resources are pooled and we are able to work in cooperation with other bodies.