

**Baltinglass
St Joseph's Convent
Bell Tower
Swift Nest Box Project
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Material used to make the nest boxes

- 18mm exterior plywood was used.
- The 18mm avoided me having to use extra battens for structural strength and also for the insulation afforded by the thickness of the wood.
- The front of the nest boxes was covered with Flash Band (flexible bitumen and foil strip used to create a watertight seal) to further protect the boxes.



Internal dimensions of the nest boxes

- The internal dimensions of the nest boxes are 150mm high by 324mm by 344 deep.
- The boxes couldn't be made any bigger due to the size of the louvre window openings and the access hole to the bell tower.



Nest Box entrance holes

- Entrance holes to the individual nest boxes were cut into the plywood.
- Entrance hole dimensions are 28mm high x 65mm high.
- A grip ladder was placed under each entrance (65 x 28mm) because of the slippery nature of the Flash Band (see page 2)



How boxes were assembled

- All joints were glued and screwed (used 50mm decking screws that are rust proof).
- All exterior wood was treated with 4 coats of exterior water based varnish which had a low VOC (volatile organic compound) and so more environmentally friendly.



- All interior wood was washed with a mild detergent, no treatment applied.
- Pre-lined nest cups were provided by cutting a round hollow in the floor of the nest box.
- Nest material (moss, short grass and soft feathers).



How the box was fixed in place

- Any surface exposed directly to the elements was clad in Flash Band (flexible bitumen and foil strip used to create a watertight seal) to further protect the boxes.
- **Prior to installing the boxes I paid particular attention to completely sealing the louvres except where the box is attached. You can see a before and after photo. I used a heavy gauge plastic mesh as it wouldn't rust. This was a big concern because if a swift was to gain entry to the bell tower while prospecting for a nest site it would not be able to get back out.**





- Research tells me that swifts prefer higher louvres and not to bother having boxes behind the complete louvre.





Attraction Call System

- Two speakers , two cables were placed in the tower in case one fails. As mentioned I won't be able to gain entry going forward and the calls will probably have to be played for 2 yrs at least.

Additional Note

- Once building work has finished on the convent it won't be possible to gain entry to inspect the boxes.
- The Budget only allowed me to make 3 boxes of 4 nest boxes and 1 of 2 nest boxes. No particular reason why I have the boxes arranged the way they are.
- Bottom of the louvre is 10m high,