



OAKS & ACORNS SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, LUTON
MARLEY ALUTEC



Cost-effective, extremely durable and requiring very little maintenance, aluminium certainly ticks all the boxes when it comes to social landlords' requirements – and that's without even considering its enviable environmental pedigree. Here, Tony Wereszczynski, Technical Director of Marley Alutec, takes a closer look at the many benefits of this useful metal and offers advice on the practical and aesthetic aspects of choosing an aluminium rainwater system.

Aluminium is perhaps the most sustainable building material available; it can be recycled again and again without any loss in quality. Indeed, it's been estimated that 75% of all the aluminium ever produced is still in use today.

With growing pressure on housing associations to choose sustainable building products, these are certainly persuasive arguments in aluminium's favour – yet they are far from the only reasons to specify an aluminium rainwater system. Lightweight and with a straightforward installation process, aluminium systems are easy to handle on site – particularly when compared to heavy cast iron.

Rainwater systems manufactured from aluminium also offer particularly impressive whole life costs, as the material is so resistant to corrosion that very little maintenance is required during the life of the product – again a key consideration for social landlords with a number of properties to look after.



These were the key reasons North Hertfordshire Homes chose a bespoke aluminium fascia and soffit system for the Oaks and Acorns social housing development in Luton. With an unusual curved roof design, creating the unique system was a welcome challenge for Marley Alutec's technical design team. Working closely alongside subcontractors Specialised Fixings of Ipswich, the manufacturer supplied a complete solution, including products from its range of aluminium rainwater systems.

Commissioned by North Hertfordshire Homes, the affordable housing was built on behalf of Luton Borough Council as part of its programme to ease local housing pressures. The development consists of 12 one-bedroom flats, several three-bedroom terraced houses and 10 four-bedroom semi-detached properties. The majority of properties on the site will be rented as social housing, while the remaining homes will be sold under a shared ownership scheme.

A key condition of the planning consent was that the properties conform to Level Three of the Code for Sustainable Homes, therefore all building products specified within the project needed to meet high levels of sustainability. In addition, the client required a durable and low-maintenance solution that would minimise future repairs and upkeep.

Already familiar with the environmental pedigree and long term performance of Marley Alutec's products, main contractor Hill Partnerships specified the Alutec fascia, soffit, and coping system for the arched roofline, which was installed by specialist subcontractors Specialised Fixings.

Robert McTiernan, General Manager at Specialised Fixings, commented: "This project was more challenging than a standard housing association build, as the design featured large curved areas. We spent a lot of time working with Marley Alutec on the up front design to make it absolutely perfect and to avoid any problems during the installation process." Manufactured to meet the highest standards of durability and reliability, Marley Alutec's fascia and soffit systems offer a lightweight alternative to PVC or sheet aluminium solutions. Comprising a 100% recycled polyethylene core, with a composite aluminium outer layer and high performance PVDF paint, the system is extremely durable, with a life expectancy of 50 years or more.

Hill Partnerships also specified the Evolve Deepflow gutter system along with Flush-fit 76mm Ø downpipes, in a slate grey shade. Evolve Deepflow is a semi-elliptical profile with an exceptional hydraulic performance of 4.9 litres per second, enabling it to efficiently drain larger roof areas or those with long, steep pitches – as is the case at Oaks and Acorns. Manufactured from marine grade aluminium, the Evolve Deepflow system is 100% recyclable at the end of its exceptionally long lifespan – lasting 50 years or more. In addition, the system is highly resistant to corrosion, meaning this period is virtually maintenance free.

Finley Wood, Development Project Manager from North Hertfordshire Homes commented: "We are really pleased with the development. The properties have been designed to be aesthetically pleasing, with the striking roof shape and a strong focus on environmentally friendly materials such as aluminium and timber, and the products from Marley Alutec have certainly helped us to achieve this overall look."

There are many factors to take into account when accessing the suitability of a rainwater system and to ensure the specified system is the right choice. Aluminium rainwater systems certainly have a wide range of benefits to offer, providing cost effective, attractive and durable systems that are simple to install.

To watch the case study video or for more information please visit www.marleyalutec.co.uk



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