

Case Study: Cornish Units, Bideford

Metrotile Lightweight Roofing is constantly winning new fans due to the many benefits that a traditional roofing material such as slate or clay simply cannot match. The durability and security benefits, in addition to the aesthetic appeal, have found Metrotile winning over local authority and Housing Association specifiers for the refurbishment of Cornish Unit properties.

One such Housing Association is Tarka Housing. Based in Devon, Tarka looks after approximately 6000 properties (in conjunction with West Country Homes) in the Devon and Cornwall areas. From time to time, it is important to complete major refurbishments on housing stock to ensure Government living standards can be achieved and that the homes can supply shelter to families for years to come.

In Bideford, Devon, Tarka is responsible for the maintenance of Cornish Unit homes. Cornish Units are post-war properties, originally designed as a short-term solution to alleviate the housing shortage. Cornish Units were not expected to last for very long, however decades later many are still standing across the UK and a contributing factor is the maintenance programs taken out on the properties throughout the years.

Cornish Units are distinguished by their Mansard Roofing, which requires a roofing material that can be fitted as vertical cladding, just like Metrotile's Shingle profile. Paul Hester is Building Surveyor at Tarka Housing and responsible for overseeing maintenance projects. When the time came for a major refurbishment project for Tarka's Cornish Unit stock, Mr Hester began to look for the ideal roofing material. He stated:

"We had initially specified a similar product from another manufacturer, but having had no previous experience of the Cornish type houses, their system did not work and was not as cost effective" It was at this stage Mr Hester discovered Metrotile: "The aesthetic appearance of the tiles and the ease of application on this project, together with Metrotile's experience with projects of this type and their availability to visit site to give advice and help were important factors when choosing Metrotile's products."

The results are stunning, giving the Cornish Units a fresh, renewed aesthetic while ensuring many years of service from the new rooftops, backed by Metrotile's forty year weatherproof guarantee.

Now that the Cornish Units are complete, how does Mr Hester feel about using Metrotile on future projects?

"Through our experience with this Cornish house refurbishment project, we intend to carry out other similar projects soon, I would like to use the system more when I can. I was surprised how cost effective the tiles are, their aesthetic appearance, and how easy they were to fit. I was also amazed at how fast they can be installed, and am full of praise for their recommended approved contractors."

