

# Single Piece Bay Canopies Speed Site Work on Housing Refurbishment Project

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The nationwide housing crisis and shortage of skilled site labour is forcing many builders to examine traditional construction methods. Key aims are to streamline site processes to reduce construction times, assure quality and achieve higher standards such as improved insulation and reduced maintenance. The use of one-piece canopies from Octaveward typifies the new approach.

A project in Liverpool for Cobalt Housing shows what can be achieved. In a major initiative to upgrade post war housing, which is structurally sound, but in other respects run down, a programme of comprehensive refurbishment is underway. Most of the properties have ground floor bays with UPVC windows and bay roofs of timber, felt and Rosmary tile.

Octaveward canopies are single-piece GRP fabrications. Traditional in appearance, they match the Rosmary tiles closely, but provide a long-life zero maintenance solution that meets standards and is in keeping with the character of the property. They are fabricated off site in a quality assured certified environment and high levels of insulation are built in. A 15-year guarantee is given.

The single piece canopy can be installed in a matter of hours rather than days as required for conventional joinery, felt and tile constructions. In fact, over 40 properties per week are fitted with the new canopies. This allows other trades to access site more quickly so that the entire programme can proceed without any delay.

Octaveward can fabricate canopies to simulate most traditional roofing materials, including tile, slate and lead. "Even to a trained eye it is often difficult to spot the difference between our single piece GRP canopy and the traditional alternative. The big difference is the time saved, reduced dependence on skilled trades on site and the benefit of having buildings closed, secure and protected from the weather more quickly," explained Octaveward director Trevor Williams.

The current programme with Cobalt has been running for two years and over 1000 properties have been renovated. Capital projects manager, Nicola Smith commented, "We have a variety of objectives to meet. Refurbishment needs to be of high quality to meet current and projected standards and avoid future maintenance. We want to cause minimal disturbance to our tenants and we want to lift the appearance of the properties while retaining their essential character. Octaveward and the other team members have helped us achieve this."

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