

Ideal for getting away from it all



Rural retreats, clockwise from top left: One of the cottages at Achnasheen, School Cottage on Colonsay, Towerburn House near Denholm, and Bullrock Cottage at Ford near Lochgilphead



THE image of Scots living it up on Hogmanay is one recognised around the world. And while many of us like to get into the spirit of New Year, wouldn't it be nice, before the holiday is over and real life beckons, to retreat to somewhere small, comfortable and quiet?

At Achnasheen in Ross-shire, 16 miles from Gairloch and just over 70 miles west of Inverness, is an unusual and charming development of four traditional croft houses. They were designed by Croydon-born entrepreneur Sylvia Marshall, who built a home for herself in Wester Ross when she could not find anything she liked on the market.

Then, when more land became available, she decided to build four more, smaller properties, which are so like traditional crofts in look and layout they have been commended by Scottish National Heritage.

Each sits in its own generous, stock proof plot of just over an acre, with views towards Gruinard Bay, and is built with stone walls, Caithness slate window sills, pitched slate roofs, vaulted timber ceilings and the added advantages of good insulation.

Inside are solid oak floorboards and a Morso wood-burning stove. Each of the crofts has a living room, kitchen/dining

by Jenny Shields

room, master bedroom with shower room, bathroom, a second double bedroom and bathroom. Finishes include Italian slate tiles in the kitchen, oak units, and a full gable-end fireplace in Scottish stone.

The four crofts are each priced at offers over £230,000. More details from Strutt and Parker in Inverness.

Escaping from the rat race to the peace of Anstruther in Fife is an appealing prospect and on Shore Street is a little gem of a place. This double upper flat, which is in excellent condition, has open views over the harbour to the Firth of Forth.

There is a living room with corniced ceiling, a smart dining kitchen which has been designed to maximise all the available space, an attractive, all-white bathroom and, on the upper floor, two double bedrooms, again with views over the water.

Offers around £150,000 to Pagan Osborne. Bullrock Cottage at Ford, near Lochgilphead in Argyll, is a traditionally-built, one-and-a-half-storey home lying in a quiet glen close to Glen Awe.

The property has been constructed and finished to an exacting standard and is in perfect, walk-in condition. On the ground floor

is a living room with multi-fuel stove, a kitchen/dining room, a utility room, conservatory, bedroom and a bathroom with beautiful Italian floor and wall tiles. On the upper floor are two more bedrooms, one of which has its own shower room.

The landscaped garden is a peaceful haven with plants, shrubs and a stream. There is also a substantial garage/workshop and plenty of parking space. A fixed price of £225,000 has been set by selling agent Argyll 4 Sale in Lochgilphead.

ON the Hebridean island of Colonsay, which lies about 15 miles south of its larger neighbour Mull, live just over 100 permanent residents in what is regarded as one of Britain's most remote communities, although a new airstrip has just been laid, allowing twice-weekly flights to Oban as well as the regular ferry services to Kintyre and Oban.

Only a handful of traditional island cottages has come onto the open market in the last century, which is one of the reasons why School Cottage is so special. This former school croft house, which has wonderful southerly views over Loch Fada and is no longer subject to crofting law, is simplicity itself. On the ground floor there is a living room, a bedroom, small kitchen and

a bathroom, as well as a lean-to store – all of which could be remodelled – plus two more bedrooms in the upper floor.

Offers over £150,000 are invited by CKD Galbraith in Glasgow.

For those looking for something spacious, gracious and tranquil, there is a wonderful apartment for sale in the west wing of Towerburn House, a mansion near the Borders village of Denholm. There is a drawing room with open fire, a dining room, breakfasting kitchen, three bedrooms and a bathroom.

The property sits in sweeping, landscaped grounds in the middle of unspoiled countryside. A fixed price of £185,000 has been set by Hastings and Co. in Kelso.

The village of Clachtoll, five miles from Lochinver in Sutherland, must have some of the most stunning scenery anywhere in the British Isles. With its own sandy beach and a quiet pace of life, this would be an ideal place to unwind.

Romar is a detached villa which admittedly could now do with a little updating but which has great potential. There are two reception rooms, a breakfasting kitchen, two bedrooms, a box room and bathroom. A fixed price of £110,000 has been set by selling agents Munro and Noble in Inverness.

For more information please visit <http://www.messagegabs.com/email>.

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