



PROPERTY OF THE MONTH

Croft houses, Sand, nr Gairloch





As the founder of a global training consultancy, the winner of The National Sales Lifetime Achievement Award and an entrepreneur who turned an interest in DIY into a successful business, Sylvia Marshall takes a “can do” approach to life in general.

It comes as no surprise then to learn when Sylvia, who describes herself as “an ordinary, middle aged woman”, wanted to move to Scotland and couldn’t find a home to her exact requirements, she had it built herself.

Sylvia, who comes originally from Croydon, told *Highland Life*: “Going off to beautiful Wester Ross and building my own home was lovely. I thoroughly enjoyed it. And when the builder, who is a crofter, said to me he had more land for sale, it seemed only natural to offer the same standard of home to others.”

The end result is four stunning croft-style cottages at Sand, Wester Ross. The homes have been commended by Scottish Natural Heritage for their likeness to the look and layout of original crofts.

Each sits in generous grounds and has been sensitively designed to take advantage of the unique location with views towards Gruinard Bay.

The accommodation comprises an entrance porch, living room, kitchen/dining room, hallway and two bedrooms.

The finishes are of the highest standard incorporating authentic stone walls with the added advantage of

modern comfort, double chimneys, hand crafted Caithness slate window sills, pitched slate roofs and vaulted timber ceilings.

Sylvia said: “The houses are spectacular, I’m delighted with them.”

Sylvia’s property restorations are an integral part of her successful DIY website – cosyhomesonline.com – offering help and advice to anyone who wants to tackle household jobs with confidence.

She got the idea for the venture after project managing the transformation of a derelict Croydon bank into her company’s headquarters. This not only sparked a new hobby but was watched by thousands of viewers as she broadcast her exploits on the web.

She said: “I got ripped off every which way – you could see me crying in the corner sometimes – but all in all it was great fun and I learned a great deal.”

Although she has since gone on to learn new skills such as bricklaying and carpentry, she left the crofts up to the professionals.

She said: “Much as I like to get the message across that I’m here doing DIY and so can you, sometimes it is just as important to know when to call in the experts.”

Strutt & Parker is selling the crofts at offers over £230,000 each.

For more information contact Kevin Maley on 01463 719171.

