



A Strawbale Holiday Home

Green property made from straw bales offers stunning holiday accommodation



Holidaymakers are being given the chance to enjoy a getaway in a unique, energy efficient property that has been constructed using over 500 bales of straw – the Jill Strawbale House in the Scottish Highlands.

The eco-friendly holiday home, which sits in an elevated position in Strontian near Fort William, uses straw bales as its main form of insulation and exports five times more power than it imports.

Helping to reduce the impact of a holiday on the environment and offering greater self-efficiency, the property gets most of its power from two micro hydro generators. The owners, Robert and Justine Dunn, also encourage guests to recycle and use public transport wherever possible throughout their stay, as well providing eco-friendly cleaning solutions.

With a background in tropical forest management, Robert and Justine decided to build a highly efficient holiday home to generate income for their retirement. The strawbale house sits on land that came with an old vicarage that they moved into and renovated over 15 years ago.

Copying a remarkable design from Cumbrian-based engineer, Brian Waite, who built the first one to show it could be done, they worked with a local architect to help finalise plans and gain the necessary permissions.

As well as featuring floor-to-ceiling windows offering spectacular views over Loch Sunart and Morvern Hills, the house has sliding glass doors leading onto a balcony. A spiral staircase gives

access to the large lower deck with hot tub, dining and seating areas with a chimenea. There is also a telescope to spot local wildlife and to stargaze in their dark skies.

In the surrounding area there is the historic Ariundle oak woods - a temperate rainforest - and the old lead mines. The 'Corbett' mountains, Loch Sunart, Ardnamurchan Lighthouse and Sanna Bay are also located close by.

Robert, who did most of the construction along with this family, comments: "Despite having no experience of the building industry, Justine and I were keen to create the holiday home ourselves. By picking a cruck frame design that was easy to erect, we have been able to do most of the work with help from friends and the rest of the family too.

"In the past, we have worked in the tropics and when we came back to the west coast of Scotland we decided to put down roots in the village of Strontian so that our four children could go to the recently-built high school. We have always been passionate about the environment and knew the holiday home had to be eco-friendly and energy efficient.

"Many people do not realise that straw is one the cheapest and most sustainable forms of insulation. Covered inside and out with lime it also makes the house breathable, allowing moisture in the air to move from the inside of the house to the outside. This helps to cut energy bills, boost home comfort and promote healthy indoor air."

Mark Whitehouse, Area Manager at cottages.com for Western Scotland, said: "Sustainability continues to be high on the agenda, so we are delighted to have signed this extraordinary property that uses straw bales as its main form of insulation. The property is truly unique not only in the fact that it is eco-friendly and green, but also because it is a grand space encompassing an amazing design."

The Jill Strawbale House ([property reference: UKC2935](#)) is now available through cottages.com. It is part of the cottages.com Green Scheme, a collection of thousands of holiday cottages that promote a greener and more eco-friendly holiday experience.

Example lead-in

The Jill Strawbale House is available from £813 in the low season for seven nights self-catered accommodation. Sleeps 5 in two bedrooms. To book, visit **cottages.com** or call 0345 498 6900.

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Notes to Editors

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