

Stylish, charming and smart... just like Poirot

By Paul Drury

YOU can just see Hercule Poirot descending the Art Deco staircase, hot on the trail of another beastly evil-doer. Or perhaps Richard Hannay, escaping the flats where a dastardly deed has just been committed in *The 39 Steps*.

Yet at Sandringham Court in Newton Mearns, near Glasgow, all the drama is in the building. Constructed in the late 1930s, this collection of two blocks of flats on the sought-after Broom Estate was modelled on stylish urban units in London and New York.

For the well-to-do of the West of Scotland, this was an address to aspire to. Here, everything beautiful about Art Deco was celebrated, with its linear symmetry, stepped forms, geometric curves and ornamental style.

The wonderful entrance hall could be mistaken for one of the great liners which steamed across the Atlantic in the pre-war years.

And there were the thoughtful glass bricks used to separate the owner's living area from the servants' quarters.

But Sandringham Court is no stuffy museum. It is in the final throes of refurbishment after being allowed to lie empty for almost five years.

This work will allow another generation of residents to appreciate a simply gorgeous apartment block, topped by four fabulous £550,000 penthouses.

Developer Stephen McKechnie stepped in to buy Sandringham Court in 2012 after its previous owners went bust.

'I just saw it as an iconic building,' said Mr McKechnie, who won the support of a Swedish bank to carry out the conversion.

'It's important to me that we retain as much of the character and detail of the original apartments in the work that we do.'

'We have put original doors, light fittings and mirrors into storage to ensure they are not damaged. I am desperate to retain the roll-top radiators, curved walls, glass bricks and elegant staircase.'

'I can't believe it is not a listed building. Had the previous owners gone ahead with their refurbishment, they could have ripped everything out without penalty. That would have been tragic.'

The fact that it is not listed, however, meant that Mr McKechnie's Kelvin Properties was allowed to add the four penthouses on the roof, offering stunning views as far as the Erskine Bridge and Loch Lomond.

There are only two three-bedroom apartments left in the first phase, costing £369,000 and £379,000. Work will begin on the second phase, involving the twin block next door, in March next year.

Sandringham Court sits at the heart of the Broom Estate, constructed by builders Mactaggart & Mickel between 1934 and 1939.



TRÈS CHIC: Sandringham Court was built in the pre-war Art Deco style, an era that inspired Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, left



The blueprint was Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire, an early 20th Century concept of a pre-planned housing area paying due respect to its rural surroundings.

Mactaggart & Mickel took the English theme through to its red-brick garden walls and house tiles, and even insisted that the Broom Estate loch was a 'lake'.

It was presented as a rural idyll, far from the smoking stacks of the city yet within daily commuting distance for those with business in Glasgow. Sandringham Court was an unusual aspect of the Broom Estate, where elegant, detached villas stepped back from the road were built for sale.

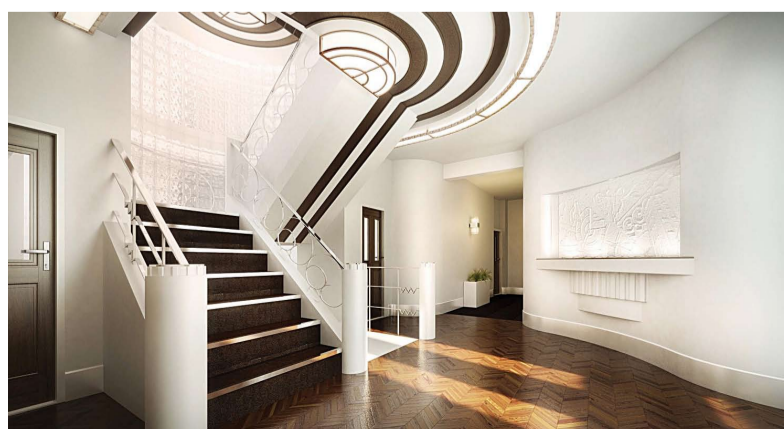
Sandringham Court's apartments were rented out for the sum of £250 per year. To put that into context, two years' rent could buy a newly-built bungalow nearby.

The builder's advertising was seen as ground-breaking for the 1930s but even they went over the top when they lavished their praise for the Broom Estate. It read: 'The adoption of Modernism does not always bid goodbye to beauty... the striking modern architecture is well-expressed without losing anything of the dignity of house design.'

The flats were initially intended for couples who could no longer look after their big homes and gardens. Now called 'downsizers', Sandringham Court is appealing to the very same couples 80 years on.

Just watch out for a small Belgian detective on the stairs.

● For information contact selling agents Slater Hogg & Howison on 0141 616 2366, or email newtonmearns@slaterhogg.co.uk



SUMPTUOUS ELEGANCE: The hallway at Sandringham Court with its graceful curves and wooden parquet floors is reminiscent of the fashionable ocean-going liners of the period

Homes & Gardens

FREE DELIVERY

Order before November 18th using code MAIL18 at checkout

Rochelle armchair

Our price

£295

High street price
£545

LIMITED EDITION: 34 AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY



Pale Putty (as pictured)



'The Rochelle, the darling of Alison at Home's French range, is now available for a limited period upholstered in a beautiful pale putty cotton. It's a supremely versatile piece which will work effortlessly in any home. I have always believed furniture of this style and quality needn't cost the earth, and I have used my years of interiors experience to source this gorgeous armchair, for just £295. The Rochelle truly epitomises the Alison at Home ethos of luxury for less.'

Founder, Alison at Home and The Daily Telegraph's interiors expert.

All the best, Alison Cork

A

ALISON AT HOME

To order visit
alisonathome.com
or call
0800 011 4793 (24/7)