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Clear vision

Inspired by the feel of boutique hotels and open-plan living in South Africa, Katherine and Jamie Burgess gutted their classic London terrace to transform it into a streamlined space Words Laura Snoad Photography Rachel Whiting



Katherine and Jamie Burgess' London home really pushes the boundaries of what you can achieve with an urban Victorian terrace. Downstairs, the ground floor has been carved out to create an open-plan space that's ideal for the couple's sociable lifestyle, complete with a large garden-facing kitchen, bar and minimalist living area, which is more akin to a luxury hotel than a family home.

In 2004, the couple sold up and moved to South Africa for six months, and it was here that the seed for open-plan living was firmly planted in their minds. With no ties on their return to the UK, they stuck a pin in a map and →

above Katherine and Jamie (with daughter Charlotte, 4) wanted a family space that would also be ideal for socialising

left This classic Victorian exterior belies the modern interior behind



this picture
Full-height sliding doors lead out to the terrace, which allows the couple to take their entertaining outside, too



'I wanted to integrate the ground floor into one space and connect the house with clean lines'

above A Quantum kitchen has been designed to fit in with the brief for socialising. The muted glossy-glass splashbacks contrast with the wooden cupboards

right Roof glazing above the dining table brings in extra light to the terrace kitchen

ended up buying a small Georgian house in a Dorset village. 'Annoyingly, the quiet life didn't really suit Jamie and his work kept drawing him back to London,' explains Katherine. 'I like to live in wellies but I also like my husband, so we moved to London and escape to Dorset at the weekends.'

They chose an area in London's Fulham, which they knew well and where they already had quite a few friends. Despite being in the heart of the capital, it still has some of the country feel Katherine craved – with parks, old pubs and close proximity to the Thames Path. It is also ideally located for escaping the city and disappearing down to Dorset.

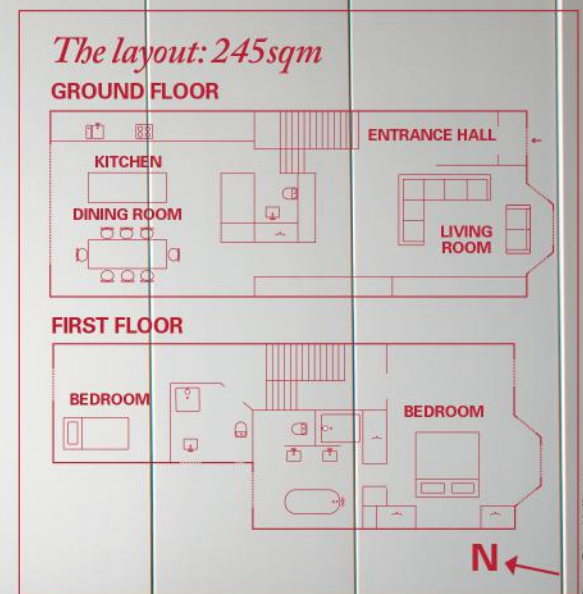
Initially, Katherine and Jamie had planned to open up the ground floor to improve the flow between rooms and increase the feeling of space, but after seeing Paul McAneary Architects' plans, they decided to refurbish the entire house. 'We'd moved a lot since we married and had always chosen old houses with a warren of small rooms, but that all changed when we rented in Cape Town,' says Katherine. 'We lived in a newly built property; it wasn't particularly big but it had been incredibly well designed – it was open-plan and very easy to live in. We thought our wish to duplicate this in a terraced house in Fulham was fairly ridiculous, but fortunately for us, Paul thought otherwise.'

As the side-return had been extended and the basement already dug out, there was simply no option for further additions. Instead, McAneary worked with the house's existing footprint, reconfiguring the entire ground floor into one large space based on the idea of a flowing loop from back to front. 'Jamie and Katherine were full of energy and great →





this picture
Bespoke built-in storage designed by the architect and wooden cladding on the walls gives the open-plan living space a minimal and natural feel



Homes Period conversion

above Little thoughtful details around the house, such as the over-bath bookshelf, have been inspired by boutique hotels

fun to work with. Their lifestyle involves a lot of entertaining, so I wanted to integrate the ground floor and connect the house together with clean lines. In terms of following a brief for the project, they liked boutique hotels and that became a major concept, especially where we implemented the idea of little suites within the house,' says McAnear.

One of the biggest challenges was how to introduce light into the basement, so McAnear developed the unusual plan of creating a transparent front step made of thick glass that acts as a lightwell for the downstairs study. This ingenious idea had never been done in the area, meaning McAnear had to spend quite some time working with Hammersmith and Fulham Council to collaborate on the design – the only part of the entire house that required planning permission.

'Forming any new precedent means that the chief of planning has to sign it off,' explains McAnear. 'With that, you have to submit a lot more drawings and documentation to explain what it's going to be like. I think the planners were worried that we might create a big glass box at the front that would be massively overpowering, but in fact it fits in with the Victorian detailing. The effort was well worth it as there's so much light coming into the basement now.'

The build started in 2008 and, as the project was somewhat larger than the pair had initially intended, Katherine and Jamie decided to move out for six months. But soon the plan was to change again. 'We were very close to having all the →



left The stairs are one of the original period features; they have been given a modern update with a natural stair runner and white spindles and steps

far left All the ground-floor spaces seamlessly flow into each other; the idea is based on a flowing loop from back to front

this picture The built-in wardrobe conceals a door that leads to the couple's en-suite bathroom



drawings finalised when we found out that I was pregnant, so we had to go back to the drawing board,' says Katherine. 'My basement study was given over to a playroom, so Paul came up with the inspired idea of having an office in the garden. It's heated, air-conditioned, has running water, electrics and a front-door entry system so I don't have to run through the house to answer the door. It's my oasis.'

Elsewhere in the house, McAneary has tried to maintain clean lines in each of the spaces by creating plenty of bespoke, built-in storage. The couple's interior style has taken its lead from this idea, keeping clutter to a minimum but introducing a natural palette of green, brown and white along with tactile materials to make the space feel warm and lived in.

'We have no plans to change a thing here – Paul has created the perfect space for us to live, work and entertain in – and this even includes the pets, as he sourced stone floor tiles that our ancient dogs don't slip on!' laughs Katherine. It's a partnership that looks set to continue far into the future, too. McAneary has already finished a project at Jamie's head office, and with the couple having now swapped their Dorset abode for Sussex, he has drawn up a plan for a brand-new house to replace the falling-down one they currently own there. 'Paul has understood our brief perfectly and it's going to be a wonderful and easy place to spend time with our family and friends in,' says Katherine. **GD**

Recreate Katherine and Jamie's pared-back style with these sleek and natural-inspired buys, p74

Suppliers

PROJECT TEAM Architect

Paul McAneary Architects (020 7240 0500; paulmcaneary.com)

Contractor Richard Weir

at Roxburgh Construction (020 7731 7480; roxburghconstruction.co.uk)

Structural engineer Clancy Consulting

(020 3077 0970; clancy.co.uk)

Building regulations BBS

Building Control (01753 271 660; bbsbuildingcontrol.co.uk)

STRUCTURE Glazing Fineline

Aluminium (01934 429 922; finelinealuminium.co.uk)

Plumbing Aston Matthews

(020 7226 7220; astonmatthews.co.uk)

Garden design Claire Lakey at

Metro Planting (020 8299 3837)

FIXTURES & FITTINGS Kitchen

Quantum (020 8892 6430; quantumfittedfurniture.co.uk)

Appliances Gaggenau

(0844 892 8988; gaggenau.com)

Bathroom

sanitaryware Aston Matthews

(as before) Wall tiles Directstone

(01727 731 248; directstone.co.uk)

Cabinetry Quantum

(as before) Kitchen flooring Royal Mosa

(+31 43 368 9444; mosa.nl/en)



this picture and left Katherine's outdoor study is her oasis and sits perfectly at the bottom of the low-maintenance, landscaped garden

