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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 Snaud 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
ended up buying a small Georgian house in a Dorset village. 'Amazingly, the quiet life didn’t really suit Jamie and his work kept drawing him back to London,' explains Katherine. ‘I like to live in the country but I also love 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 de-stressing 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 McAneny 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 ambitious, 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, McAneny 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 –
the layout: 245sqm

GROUND FLOOR

- Kitchen
- Entrance Hall
- Dining Room
- Living Room
- Bedroom
- Bedroom

FIRST FLOOR

- Bedroom
- Bedroom

above Little thoughtful details around the house, such as the en-suite bathrooms, have been inspired by boutique hotels

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 stops

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

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 McAney.

One of the biggest challenges was how to introduce light into the basement, so McAney 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 McAney 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 McAney. "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, Katharine and Janké decided to move out for six months. But soon the plan was to change again. "We were very close to having all the..."
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, McAnear 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. McAnear 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

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**Suppliers**

**PROJECT TEAM Architect**
Paul McAnear 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; finelinealuminiun.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 6436; 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 (+44 43 368 9444; mosa.nl/en)

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

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

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