



# Most improved player

*Charlotte and Tony Jameson took a neglected terrace in east London and restored it to its former glory, adding a stunning extension suited to modern, family life* **Words** Elizabeth Bishop **Photography** Tim Crocker

**W**hen a family sets out to build its dream home, a degree of compromise is usually par for the course. Whether it's budgets, planners or deadlines, something usually casts a shadow over the process. Not so for Charlotte and Tony Jameson, who recently completed a huge renovation and extension of their triple-wide Georgian terrace in east London. Not only did they manage to bag the house in their dream neighbourhood that they'd waited patiently for years to go on the market, they also sailed through the planning application first time, kept to budget and got pretty much everything they'd hoped for. Rightly so, you

might wonder what their secret is? It wasn't just luck and a sprinkling of fairy dust – it was a realistic outlook on costs, a visionary architect and extraordinary raw structure in the form of a Grade II-listed building on a pristine garden square.

When the Jamesons bought the house in 2010, it was a shell of its former self – period features had been completely covered up and the interiors reconfigured in a way that simply didn't make sense. First built in 1810, the original property had been divided into a home with two self-contained flats in the basement, leaving no direct access to the garden. Higgledy-piggledy alterations, including a faux-Victorian conservatory out the back, had further →

*above* The amazing rear extension uses gigantic glass doors to allow as much light in as possible; the benefit of a north-facing house is that it won't get too hot in the summer. The garden and basement were excavated at the same time to give more height to the space

*“The challenge was how to do something contemporary in the context of a Grade II-listed home”*



*this picture There was no need for bulky storage in the kitchen as the architect designed a larder and pantry just off to the side to house all the essential paraphernalia. Limestone flooring extends from the kitchen into the garden, seamlessly linking the two*



*this picture Natural materials blend effortlessly with the stark kitchen units*  
  
*below The bespoke bronze balustrade provides a gleaming focal point to the scheme*



unpicked the way the house had been designed. The family’s goal, along with architect David Mikhail, was to reconnect the spaces into a single dwelling ready for the twenty-first century, all the while respecting its architectural heritage. Extensive internal remodelling and a rear extension that now gives the family a whopping 600 square metres of space, were the main jobs. ‘The challenge was always how you do something this contemporary in the context of a Grade II-listed house without ruining it,’ says Mikhail, who has now scooped a Wood Award for the project.

Entering from the street, you don’t instantly realise how much has changed. The entrance has been kept relatively intact, save a lick of paint and new light fittings. On either side of the central, curving staircase are two doors leading to where most of the hard graft took place – the single-storey rear addition. For this, the back half of the basement was dug out to give more height, and the garden was excavated to the same level so that gigantic, bespoke glass doors could open out to it from the new, light-filled kitchen.

This basement level is where most of the family action takes place, so it now has a TV lounge, guest bedroom, kids’ playroom and a sizeable pantry. The pièce de résistance is undoubtedly the sculptural staircase leading down to the dining area from a new mezzanine library, with its bespoke bronze balustrade made by a specialist boat-builder. ‘My concern was that the extension would feel cold and cavernous, so I was keen when David suggested fitting these bookshelves. They make the space a lot warmer, and give it some texture,’ explains Charlotte.

‘We used technology such as Google SketchUp (digital visualisation software) to show the client what it would →



*this picture* The TV room is the most vibrant space in the house, mixing iconic design pieces with the couple's original artwork

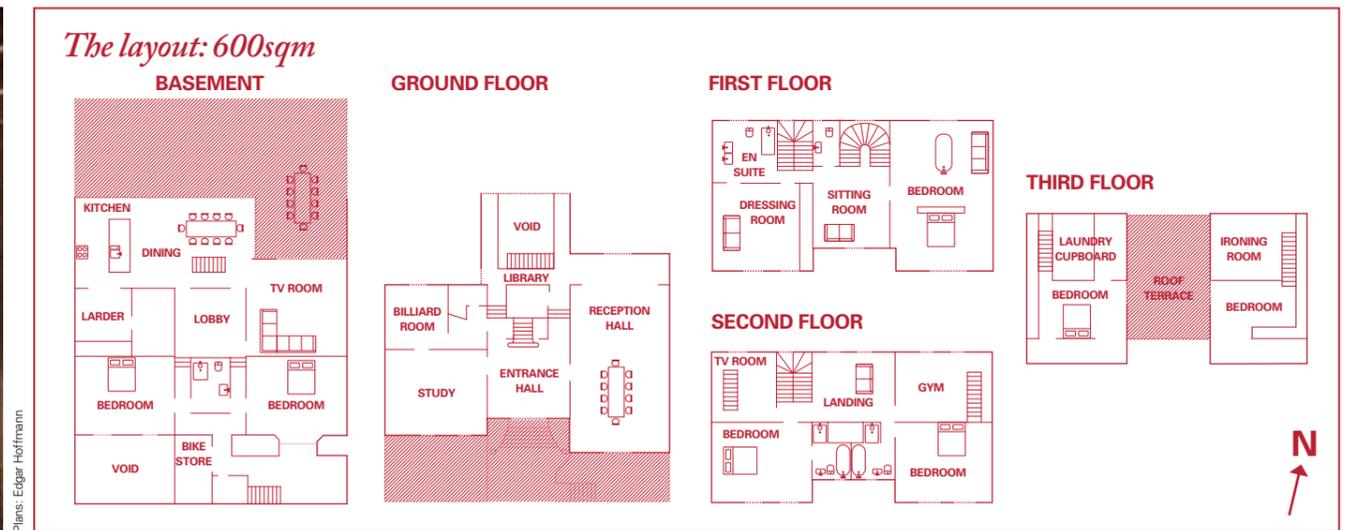
*below right* Books and larch shelves were added to provide the double-height extension with texture and warmth

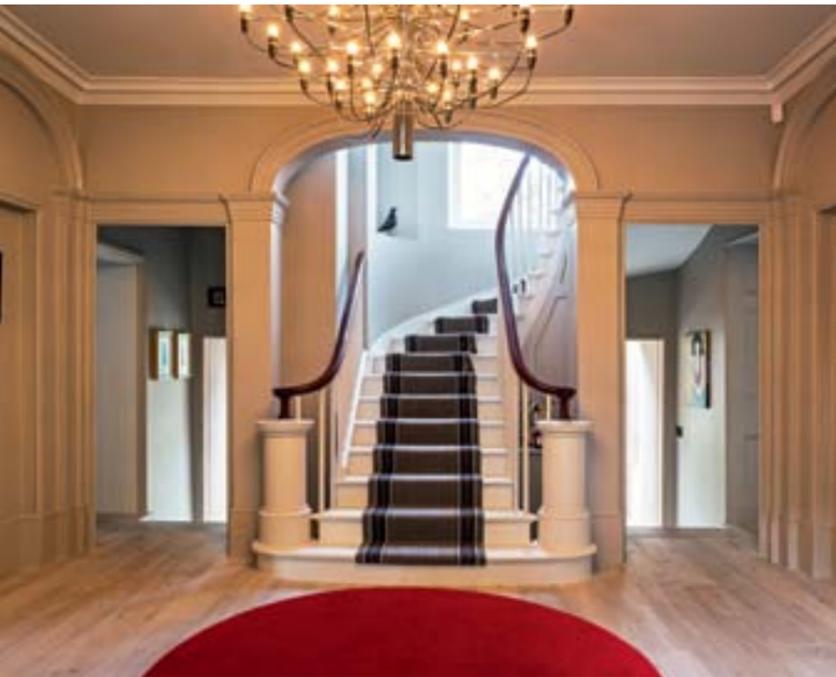


*this picture* Mikhail divided the new billiards room and office with a discreet door that looks like part of the wall when closed

look like, and to give them extra options,' explains Mikhail. One of the clever things about the entire scheme is that only three materials are used throughout – larch, white brick and Pietra Serena sandstone – which gives coherence to all the rooms. The clean glass lines of the extension feel like an organic part of this 200-year-old house – and this is mostly due to the simple palette of materials, furniture and colours. Neutral, muddy hues – blues, silvers, chocolates and greys – are the backdrop to an astonishing array of designer furniture and artwork. All of the floors are larch and stone. What's more, the white limestone bricks extend out into the multi-levelled garden, so it feels connected with the kitchen – especially on warm, sunny days when the doors are open.

There was also plenty of work to be done to the existing structure. First, they had to remove the awkward and oversized kitchen running the length of the house on the ground floor. Mikhail divided it into two rooms connected by a discreet door, giving the family a formal billiards room →





The sum of the parts is awe-inspiring and the family is aware that the house is something special

*this picture*  
Minimal and uncluttered, the master bedroom spans the depth of the house and has a bed at the south end, overlooking the square, and a freestanding Boffi bath at the north



and a brand new office space. 'It was only by putting the wall in that the rooms made sense,' says Mikhail. A new cloakroom with bespoke cupboards is situated behind an informal snug on the left of the entrance. Cornices and mouldings in all of the rooms were carefully restored, and in some cases, original beams uncovered.

The first floor was also in need of attention, reveals Mikhail. The previous owners had built a wall at the top of the sweeping staircase, blocking two large windows and views out to the square. The wall came down to create a sitting area that now connects the couple's vast, all-white bedroom, dressing room and bathroom. Up on the second level are the children's bedrooms, each with an en-suite bathroom, plus a TV room and a fully equipped gym. The top floor includes two guest bedrooms, a laundry cupboard and an ironing room. New arched doors lead out from this level to a roof terrace with sweeping views of the London skyline.

The sum of the parts is awe-inspiring and the family is aware that the house is something special. 'Tony's view was, if we're going to do it, let's do it properly,' says Charlotte. Mikhail believes this attitude helped to make the process go so smoothly. 'They paid for a proper cost analysis, which meant they were realistic about spending money. That is quite unusual,' he says. The couple also employed a planning consultant to help with the application process. 'She helped us put the application together and acted as a check on our design-and-access statement. We did all the legwork and then she gave an overview,' says Mikhail. 'I have a lot of trouble getting planning for little extensions in conservation areas. To get this on a Grade-II listed house was fantastic.'

'I absolutely adore this house,' adds Charlotte. 'It's amazing that we got exactly what we wanted.' GD

*above* The entrance hall is almost the same as when it was built in 1810, save a lick of paint, new flooring and modern lighting

*below right* Slate tiles decorate the floor and walls of the en-suite shower room that adjoins the dressing room from the master bedroom suite

*far right* Recycled half-moon windows were turned into arched doors leading out to the enviable rooftop garden. The decking was lowered to create a series of interesting levels

Combine iconic pieces and natural materials with a calm palette to achieve this look in your home, p60

## Suppliers

### PROJECT TEAM Architect

David Mikhail Architects (020 7608 1505; davidmikhail.com)

**Builder** Euro Build Contractors (01276 63953; eurobuild.co.uk)

**Structural engineer** Heyne Tillet Steele (020 7870 8050; heynetilletsteel.com)

**Garden design and planting** Jane Brockbank Gardens (020 7371 9475; janebrockbank.com)

**STRUCTURE Timber flooring** Element 7 (020 7736 2366; element7.co.uk)

**Glulam beams** Metsä Wood (0845 602 4773; metsawood.co.uk)

**Ironmongery** Williams Ironmongery (01299 250 824; williams-ironmongery.co.uk)

**White brick** Wienerberger (wienerberger.co.uk)

**Lime mortar** Conserv (01642 430 099; lime-mortars.co.uk)

**Stone** Gareth Davies (01622 271 980; garethdaviestone.co.uk)

**ECO FEATURES Sedum roof**

For similar, try Greener Power Solutions (0845 601 3881; greenerpowersolutions.co.uk)

**FIXTURES & FITTINGS Kitchen** Aprile kitchen by Boffi (020 7590 8910; boffiuk.com)

**Bath, basin and shower in master suite**

Crystal by Gobi at Boffi (as before)

**Bronze elements** Engineering & Developments (01590 673 729; engdev.co.uk)

**Exterior lighting** Belvedere by Atrium (020 7681 9933; atrium.ltd.uk)

**Wardrobes in dressing room** B&B Italia (020 759 18111; bebitalia.com)

**Lighting** Fuscina, Smithfield, Snoopy & Terraxacum 88 by Flos (020 3328 5140; flos.com);

Caboche Grande and CO Space by Foscarini (foscarini.com);

Fluoro pendants by Tom Dixon (020 7400 0500; tomixon.net)

**FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES**

**Master bed and cabinets** Siena and Dado by B&B Italia (as before)

**Kitchen stools** LEM at The Conran Shop (0844 848 4000; conranshop.co.uk)

**White leather chairs** LizB by Poltrona Frau (020 7014 5980; poltronafrau.com)

**TV cabinets** The Conran Shop (as before)

**Chairs** Loveseat by Ercol (01844 271 800; ercol.com);

Egg chair and footstool by Arne Jacobsen for Fritz Hansen (020 7637 5534; fritzhansen.com);

Eames lounge chair and ottoman for Vitra (020 7608 6200; vitra.com)

**Clock** Font clocks by Established & Sons (020 7608 0990; establishedandsons.com)