

# Period gem gets a restoration boost

MORGAN Restoration, specialist in the fine renovation of period and listed properties, has completed its latest conversion project at the locally listed 15 Sundridge Avenue in Bromley.

Built in 1887, 10 years before Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, it is a period gem which encapsulates the prosperity of the late Victorian era.

The Sundridge Avenue conservation area consists of a unique and unbroken row of eight red brick Victorian mansions with early Arts and Crafts influences. This is a near perfect example of a complete row of substantial Victorian villas in a "gentleman's suburb".

Homes of this size and stature were typically built to accommodate a complement of servants, in addition to the main family in residence, and were the preserve of classic English gentlemen of the sort portrayed by Jeremy Northam in films such as *An Ideal Husband* and *The Winslow Boy*.

Economic and social trends in the first half of the 20th century gradually saw the demise of the Big House lifestyle and a reduction in the number of households enjoying domestic help. Many Victorian villas such as 15 Sundridge Avenue

were demolished across London post 1945.

The preservation of a near complete street frontage of original villas of this era is therefore relatively rare and the restoration and conversion of 15 Sundridge Avenue is a challenge which only a specialist firm in preservation, such as Morgan Restoration, can successfully meet.

The local council's main conservation objective was the retention of the unique spatial characteristics of the villa in its mature landscape setting, without additional disruptive development or hard vehicle landscaping.

Barry Morgan, chief executive of Morgan Restoration, said: "The building had fallen into disrepair in the 80s and was severely fire damaged in the late 90s. Our first priority was to prevent further structural collapse.

"The loss of such a fine building would have been a great shame for this small conservation area and we worked closely with the council to guarantee its long-term survival."

The façade and flank wall were almost completely retained and fully repaired. Specialist stone masonry was required to replace some of

the original Arts and Crafts details with new replicas.

Imperial brick, bonded in traditional Flemish Bond, was sourced for the external walls. Due to neglect and fire damage which has destroyed the original staircase, the interior of the building has been completely rebuilt.

All the apartments vary in layout and room dimensions and benefits from the high Victorian ceilings and period sash windows, which contrast well with the sleek contemporary interiors.

The eight apartments and two outstanding penthouses have been designed to a high specification including a six-personal Kone passenger lift, disabled access, video entry phones, smoke detectors, car parking and single garages for the penthouses as well as electrically-operated remote control entrance gates.

The kitchens feature German manufactured units, including five-burner hobs, electric ovens, stainless steel integrated Neff appliances and natural stone work surfaces. Other fixtures and fittings include a mixture of Philippe Starck, Villeroy & Bosch and Hansgrohe and some apartments include under-floor heating.



● The front façade of 15 Sundridge, a scheme by Morgan Restoration in Bromley

The penthouse kitchens feature Smeg ranges and American-style fridge/freezers and all apartments have individual colour schemes and feature two fully-tiled bathrooms including Ideal standard baths with chrome fittings incorporating a shower with curved glass screen.

The two duplex penthouses feature open-plan galleries with full-height dormer glass

walls and cleverly-concealed roof terraces with private views across Kent. The larger penthouse, at around 2,500 sq ft, features a specially-designed bathroom complete with stand-alone bath in the centre of the floor, adding more than just a touch of Victorian splendour in a contemporary manner for today's discerning gentleman.

Purchasers to date have included

retired people, a single city professional and a pied-à-terre couple, as well as two secondary school teachers.

One ground floor apartment is on the market for £310,000 and the two penthouses are available for £550,000 and £700,000.

Call Morgan Restoration on 01322 866800, or the selling agent, jdm of Chislehurst, on 020 8325 8000.