

Jermyn Street might seem strait-laced with shop window after shop window of pressed shirts, smart suits and polished shoes. Yet there is more to this street in the heart of St James's than finely tailored menswear.

Keith Moon, formerly of the Who, apparently danced naked in Tramp, a private members' club on the street, while the comedian Mel Brooks got on all fours and barked like a dog. From the outset, Jermyn Street has had its share of scandal.

Henry Jermyn, the first Earl of St Albans, was extremely friendly with Henrietta Maria, Queen consort to Charles I, and was given a large parcel of land in the early 1660s, north of St James's Palace.

The historian Cindy Lawford says: "It all began with Jermyn, who may well have been the father of Charles II and who was without doubt much beloved by Henrietta Maria. Jermyn was the Queen's closest companion, her stalwart during the Civil War, and he was rewarded with a large grant of land from which he carved out St James's Square and its surrounding streets."

"Scandal surrounded his name for years, but in the end he was fabulously wealthy and able to get [the architect] Christopher Wren to build his grand church while he lived close by in suitably grand style."

Now the modestly wealthy can live "close by in suitably grand style" too, with the completion of a boutique development of eight luxury flats by Dukelease at Beau House, 102 Jermyn Street. The development will officially launch next year, with apartments priced from £2 million for a one-bedroom property. The crowning glory is a 3,000 sq ft, three-bedroom penthouse, which is likely to cost in excess of £15 million and has views of Wren's church from the extensive roof terrace.

Beau House is named after George (Beau) Brummell, a Regency dandy whose statue stands on the street. "Beau Brummell was considered at the cutting edge of fashion," says Abby Brinton, the head of design at Oliver Burns, which designed the penthouse interior. "We have tried to think, 'What would the modern-day dandy like?'"

It appears that what the modern-day dandy desires is the best in understated design. The turnkey penthouse (to be sold furnished) features the smartest brands: customised Chevron dining chairs by Aiveen Daly,



One-bedroom flats in Dukelease's Beau House development in Jermyn Street, London, start at £2 million

Look suitably smart on Jermyn Street

Beau House, named after the famous dandy, is the latest luxe development in this historic address, reports Carol Lewis

a Davidson Carlton dining table made from sycamore wood, Lee Broom marble and crystal lights, and a Boffi kitchen with Gaggenau appliances.

Plus the latest

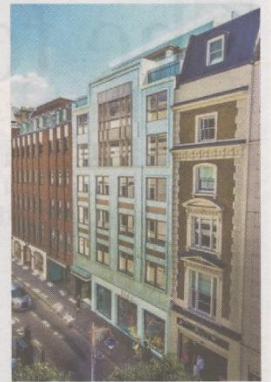
must-have, a bespoke house scent, in this case from Floris, which has been trading on Jermyn Street since the 1730s and supplied the fragrance to Brummell. The show apartment on a lower floor, designed by Edward Phillips interior design, is equally as dandy.

It is all in keeping with the area — roughly based around St James's Square and bordered to the south by The Mall, Piccadilly to the north, Green Park to the west and Regent's Street to the east. It is again becoming one of the smartest residential addresses in London, having



The church designed by Christopher Wren is visible from the terrace. Left: the penthouse is estimated to sell for more than £15 million. Right: a statue of George (Beau) Brummell, after whom Beau House was named

been dominated by offices after the Second World War. Beau House is one of a number of new developments helping to bring the residential feel back to the fore among the smart shops, hedge fund offices and gentlemen's clubs.



Residents of Beau House, nestled in the sartorial district of St James's, will have access to London's finest tailors

Other top-end developments selling in the area include Cleveland Court Mews (flats from £6.65 million), Park Place (from £115 million), The Pall Mall Collection (from £5.25 million), Ryger House (from £3.95 million) and Bennet House (from £5.275 million).

All of this activity is underpinned by the Crown Estate's work to "gently uplift" the neighbourhood. The estate, which owns half the properties in the area, is in the middle of a £500 million investment programme in St James's and is spending £1 billion in Regent Street. The plans include doubling the width of the pavement in Lower Regent Street, renamed Regent Street St James's, and the redevelopment of St James's Market.

David Smith, a director at CBRE, the estate agency selling Beau House alongside Knight Frank, says: "In the past you might have expected a discount on Mayfair, but that gap is getting closer now. Beau House is the first Dukelease development in St James's — in the past it has stuck to Covent Garden or Fitzrovia, but it has been watching the prices and now has more confidence in the area."

"Although there is more stock now, many of the developments are small. It is an area that remains a little under the radar, with sales very much on a black-book basis [where agents approach a select list of wealthy potential buyers rather than openly market a property], buyers tend to be discreet, not too flashy," he says.

