

# Looking back to look forward: plans for our 2018 garden adventures



Winter is one of those times where you can look out of the window into the garden and feel despondent. The garden can look untidy, dead stuff, things which need to be pruned, leaves all over the place, wet, cold. Pretty much an unattractive garden,

but also the cold and wet of the winter doesn't exactly inspire us to get out there and fix it, and let's be honest, a small tidy up would make the world of difference. That's why around this time I like to have a bit of review of the previous year, look back through my garden journal and my blog posts and remind myself of all the fun we've had in the garden this year. It also helps me to sit down and plan the coming year, which is an important part of gardening, planning, being prepared and dreaming.

So what were all the fun things we did this year in the garden? Well, where do I start?

## **Composting**

Last year saw us really embrace our [new compost bin](#) and get to use the compost for the first time. We discovered how different things affect the bin temperature, like how grass seems to be the biggest component for getting the bin hot, quickly. Also, we discovered that the bin makes way more compost than we actually need, but unfortunately last year, our times were all out of sync so I have 6 sacks of compost

which need to be dried and sieved but the weather had turned and I wasn't able to get this done. To dry it, I will need a few days of warm dry weather, and let's be honest, it will be June before I see any of that.

## **The greenhouse**

The greenhouse was a romping success last year, [we grew peppers](#) for the first time and were so happy with the result (quality and volume) that these have been added to our list as every year plants along with courgettes and tomatoes. The cornichon



weren't as much as of a success because the plants are just too big for the greenhouse, so we couldn't get to the fruits most of the time because they had grown behind shelves etc. Instead of cute little pickles, we ended up with baseball bat sized gherkins.

## **Raised beds**

The raised beds were not quite as successful in other years, mostly because we are having an issue with local wildlife, something is digging in the beds and using them as a toilet. The solution has been to keep the [beds under net](#) all year, but this makes it really difficult to weed or maintain the beds and so they haven't had as much love as I would normally give them.

## **The lawn**

Oh the constant battle with the lawn.

Kate will not want me admitting this to you all, so it's a good job she's in bed asleep as I write this but we have a constant battle with the lawns. Mostly the back lawn gets a

lot of moss, which means a lot of scarifying and treating. Here's the bit Kate won't want me telling you, ha ha ha you should have got up earlier than Kate, Sometimes, when she is treating the moss, she can be a bit heavy handed with the treatment and kill a lot of the lawn off, making depressing bare patches which we have to reseed and tend to. Sigh!

The front lawn is a different problem, there is not a whole lot of soil there, so we need to feed the lawn a heck of a lot and if we are a bit slow, it goes yellow VERY quickly. I've mentioned before that [grass is actually the hardest thing to grow](#) in a garden.

### **What did we learn last year?**



We learned some pretty cool stuff actually. We learned [how to dry chillies](#), cause we always have far too many. We learned to [get rid of aphids using soap](#) and we learned how to [make pots out of paper](#) so we don't have to store lots of

plastic ones.

So I think 2017 was a pretty good year and I'm looking forward to 2018.

### **What's in store for the coming year then, what are our plans?**

Oh boy, do we have an exciting year planned... firstly, the greenhouse is getting a makeover. I only have a small greenhouse and sometimes it can feel like a bit of a jungle with the tomato plants. Especially height wise as they tend to hit the roof of the greenhouse and come back down to meet me. To help with this, we are planning to raise the height of the greenhouse by adding some old railway sleepers to the base, hopefully raising the height a foot or so. Watch out for that

next month.

We also have a tree to be replaced, which is quite sad, but our rowan has died and so we are planning on replacing this with a cherry this year. This is going to mean a little bit of landscaping, so will be quite exciting to do and of course, I promise we will keep you all in the loop on this one with lots of photos and most likely a video too.

Speaking of videos, remember to pop over to our [youtube channel](#) if you ever want more info on any of our garden adventures. There are some great reviews of the garden gadgets we use as well as updates on our growing adventures like the peppers.