

It has been another wonderful week for weather, although a little overnight rain for the gardens would be perfect. Yesterday we sat outside for a birthday afternoon tea for Kirsten, the full works including pots of tea made with loose leaves. We could not go anywhere but it made the day special and is a very positive memory from this period of restriction.

The garden is continuing to develop although the flower beds are still a bit bare, with only a couple of plants, which we bought last year planted, but that will change. The vegetable garden is filling up nicely and our newly planted raspberries are covered in tiny berries so that promises a treat later in the year. The decking planter, filled with herbs and Heuchera has been a picture and the bees have loved visiting, particularly the chive flowers.



We brought a dwarf wisteria plant with us from Taunton where it had a nice south facing wall to spread across. We have not found the ideal spot here yet, but it is flowering this year and we will probably leave it where it seems happy and try to find a way of supporting it where it is. The fig tree we brought with us is also happy and covered in figs, although they may never ripen, it does depend on the summer.

One of my Christmas presents was wool, proper wool, to crochet a blanket and I finished it at the start of the lockdown. I had made the decision that if I wanted to crochet then I would only use natural fibres and I have to say it was a treat to use this yarn, from Yorkshire. I usually do my crochet as I sit 'watching' the television with the girls in the evening as I find it helps me to sleep better and it is better for me than doing puzzles on my phone at that time of night.

I have become very much more aware of what my clothes are made from since we discovered just how much plastic goes down the drain when we wash items made from acrylic and other man-made fibres, and so I decided to extend this to being more aware when I buy yarn for projects. The challenge of course is that natural fibres are more costly so I am struggling to find a new project for which I can justify the cost of the yarn. It will of course make me value what I crochet far more, being selective is something our modern way of life has discouraged. When lockdown started, I had a sudden urge to clear out items that had been accumulated but then realised there was nowhere to recycle them so that had to be put on hold for a while.

One of the unexpected challenges of lockdown has been my inability to settle to do things, and I know this is something others are also finding difficult, particularly those who are working from home. It is quite difficult to switch off from work sometimes, and with more people in the house all the time there is also less space to spread out and do things. However, I do switch off by doing Japanese logic puzzles, and as you can see I get my camera out, and I have also been making some cards. If you are shielding and stuck indoors and are running out of cards to send, please let me know and I will try and get some to you.

We had our first Zoom Elder's meeting for Wigmore this week and we are exploring ways that we can raise money for the charity of the year whilst not being able to meet. I was speaking to a friend whose son works for Marie Curie as an events co-ordinator. Like most charities they are struggling to keep their cash flow positive and they have been running online quiz evenings hosted by celebrities, last night was the final one. They have been themed and last week the theme was Gavin and Stacy, in just over an hour they raised £43,000 which was the most successful to date. I don't think we can quite manage anything on that scale but together maybe we can find ways of something. It is all about being creative and we are getting more and more practice at that which can only be a good thing.

Here is the finished blanket.

