



An Almost Impossible Thing (paperback)

By Fiona Davison

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‘Gardening, taken up as a hobby when all the laborious work can be done by a man, is delightful, but as a life’s work for a woman, it is almost an impossible thing.’ *Sir Joseph Hooker, 1817-1911.*

While working at the Royal Horticultural Society, Fiona Davison came across a cache of letters from a young gardener who was denied a fellowship because she was a woman. Appalled and intrigued to find out what became of Olive, Fiona began researching the wider story of early female professional gardeners whose struggles changed forever the rights and opportunities for women gardeners.

Gardens are seen as a place to escape the troubles of the world but this book looks back to a period where an arena for radical and far-reaching experiments. *An Almost Impossible Thing* follows six convention-busting women gardeners in the years before the First World War, examining their lives in the context of suffragism, collectivism and Empire.

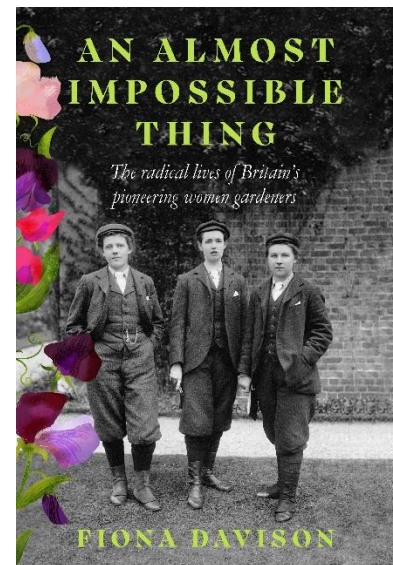
This is the paperback of the acclaimed hardback.

Praise for *An Almost Impossible Thing*

‘I devoured Davison’s book...a revealing document of social history.’ *Ysenda Maxtone Graham, TLS*

‘An engaging, thought-provoking account...delightful, quirky and very human details animate Davison’s well-researched narrative.’ *Matthew Dennison, The Daily Telegraph*

Fiona Davison is Head of Libraries and Exhibitions at the RHS. She is also the author of *The Hidden Horticulturalists*.



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