

Widening Digital Participation

Kay's tech experiences

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

My name is Kay and I have hearing difficulties. I wanted to share with you some of the tech that I use and what my experience of that is.

What tech. are you loving right now?

I've just got into Bluetooth. This came across my radar and I began to wonder if it could help us, the hard of hearing. I just started asking people about it and I gradually learned. I think it's wonderful. I've got some cheap Juice buds at the moment and I can make a YouTube playlist and HEAR some loud music 🎧. I can HEAR on my mobile phone. I haven't tried Skype or FaceTime yet. I'm sure there must be other applications which I'm unaware of.

What other tech have you tried?

Previous to my Bluetooth investigation I had been using **wireless headphones** on and off for a few years. Maybe I didn't pay enough but they were always too big and loose for my head. And I don't particularly like using earbuds on long strings.

I have **Apple products** (iPhone and iPad). Apple have some Bluetooth wireless AirPods which I covet. But before splashing out £159 I decided to buy the Juice ones (reduced from £30 to £20: free with my Sainsbury's rewards) on which to practice. These Juice ones are connected to each other by a short cord. The thing is, the sound is so loud and clear. I'm no connoisseur of sound ie. for classical music, say, but it's good enough for me.

I've also tried **Pertalex**, an app I downloaded, this would make sounds louder than my hearing aids, but I haven't got the hang of it. I thought it might be useful in meetings but not the meetings I attend. I shall probably delete it.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, I can listen to the radio on my iPad or iPhone. I don't have a Bluetooth radio or TV, except in the car. Well, no TV! I haven't been able to listen to Radio 4 for twenty years or more. The range is only about 10 metres, but I only have a small flat and I can therefore move around and do

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jobs if I wish to. It's bliss. Of course, when I'm out and about I can have whichever device in my bag. Also I can listen to loud music from YouTube and my neighbours can't hear it.

Perhaps I'll have saved enough for the Apple AirPods soon! They are not connected. I wish there was some way you could try the AirPods out first but as they go inside your ear I think you'll have to purchase them before trying them.