

Andrew

I'm Andrew and I had a cochlear implant in 2015. And am I pleased with it? I think my face says it all.

Yeah, I was brought up on the farm in the old days. I had the mumps at 4 years old and wore a hearing aid from 5, and when there is a lot of noise going on and animals and so on and so, picking up a lot of things, you know, "I am missing out".

When I had it first switched on back in 2015, when hearing people at first, it was very robotic talk and when I went outside it was just a lot of buzzing noise, different types of buzzing noise, but working out where they were coming from - like traffic had its sort of buzzing noise, birds and everything.

Eventually - I had to learn to 'walk before you run' - it took me at least 12 months before I heard everything more naturally. But because I had a hearing aid over 30 years it was a big difference.

But now, I hear a lot more, I hear loud machinery going, as well as small noises like indicators going off and so on. The best bit is when I am cooking. When I had the digital hearing aids, I could not hear the oven alarm going off when I was in the kitchen, but now with the cochlear [implant] I can hear the alarm going off even when I am in the living room and that's a big difference now.

When I go out and play golf and I go with a friend of mine. We were walking together and next tee and the next minute he tripped into a rabbit hole - and I said "why'd you do that?" he didn't see where we were going because he wanted to look at me so I could do lip reading. I said to him 'I don't need to look at you anymore; because I have got this machine, a cochlear, it makes a big difference'.

When I had the normal hearing aid, digital hearing aids, when I was milking the cows sometimes the hose pipe comes off on the clusters and that, and I just didn't pick it up with the digital hearing aid but now with the cochlear implant, I can actually hear when the pipe comes off, with all the machine noise going on and I can go straight exactly to the spot where the pipe was off and I never picked that up before.

With the cochlear implant you pick up a lot of things and you don't miss out anything on the farm. I'm in the Young Farmers Club, and when I was in the group before in conversation and I was not picking up all the conversation and what they're saying - and when I do bringing up [something in] conversation, they'd already been talking about that a couple of minutes ago. I really missed out, but now I don't.