

# Life With V

by Valerie Spencer Becks of Belper

Well that's it I've finally turned into a raving lunatic thanks to the wonders of modern technology.

I have always made an effort to stay at least reasonably current with new gadgets and technology, consider myself reasonably computer literate and up to date. However this week it has all become a bit too much and I have succumbed.

I started off with a phone upgrade. Everybody said ohh, you've gotta get one of these new N series phones. It was a free upgrade so I thought ok, why not. Well it arrived; took me about four hours to figure out how to make a phone call and get my contacts entered. Now I do admit to subscribing to the theory that you only refer to instructions as a last resort and eventually I did decide that I should perhaps have a quick look at the instructions.

The book is an inch thick and starts off with micros and downloading and web browsing and LAN's, wireless or otherwise, WLAN wizard (wonder if WLAN went to Hogwarts), Bluetooth, Infrared, USB and so on and so on.

Not a word about how to actually turn the phone on or make a phone call until you get to page 97 by which point the phone was very lucky it wasn't embedded in my wall.

Then yesterday I plugged the phone in to charge it. Went to get it a couple of hours later, whole thing had frozen. No I hadn't put it in the freezer by mistake but it had obviously decided to lock itself up, wouldn't charge, couldn't make calls or do anything else.

So then comes the task of having to contact the provider, the mobile is locked so couldn't dial 150, so had to find a phone number. Simple I think, I'll look on the website, nothing simple about that – the telephone number was similarly buried on about page 97 of the website.

You all know what is coming next. I then get the 25 choices of buttons to push, (well alright 5), my trouble is that I generally nod off halfway through and can't remember what the first two options are so have to listen again.

Unfortunately there isn't an option that seems to fit what I want so I push a button that seems reasonably close - then I get another list, push the button and get another list. Then I push a button and a robot comes on to tell me that they don't recognise this number and to try again – I do so about five times.



At this point I have the phone at arms length literally screaming at the poor unsuspecting piece of technology to please put me through to a \$\*%&& (human being).

After about 10 minutes of this I am ready to strangle whoever answers the phone and they can't even have the decency to tell me it is something terrible and that my urge to murder is justified – oh she says "well just take the battery out and put it back in again and it will be fine" in a tone of voice that conveys the message that I am a complete blithering idiot for not knowing this is what I should do.

What is really frustrating while I am contemplating murder is these lifeless voices constantly drivelling on telling me that in order to provide the best possible service ... blah de blah. Why don't they get a human to answer the phone - that would be the best possible service IMHO (see I know what that is so I must be up to date). I don't know about road rage, I think phone rage must be right up there as well.

I will also mention that my car decided yesterday to stop working as I was driving down the road (well where else would I be driving). I took it to the garage to the mechanic. Phoned this afternoon – no, mechanic can't fix it he's sent it off to an electrical specialist!!!

I think I'm going to buy a horse and go back to using smoke signals. Do wish we could speak to human beings again and that mechanics could fix our cars. Sigh!!

Till next time!!

V