

Things are back to normal at my home desk. Everything seems to be working now. I endured a break of several days when I had no computing capacity at all.

As suspected, my “go-slow” laptop was suffering from a conflict between two security programmes. When one was removed the machine became usable again. Normally the lack of a working laptop would simply mean using the desk machine, but that had gone on strike.

It felt quite strange; the sort of feeling you get if your car is off the road for a few days or you have an arm in a sling. You have to consider one more factor whenever you want to do something.

The weather prevented an immediate visit from my computer guru (read ‘nephew’). We spent some time talking about likely causes.

Already I had tried re-setting all the connections and disconnected all non-essential peripherals. The 3 year old battery on the motherboard was replaced in case it was failing.

My guru’s IT team ‘felt’ that it was a power problem. (Good news: a replacement power unit is cheaper than a graphics card.)

Trusting the experts ‘feel’, I did something most unusual. I read the manual (!) for the PSU (power supply unit).

Correction: I looked at it and tried to get some understanding. It revealed much information about the variety of cables involved. The details of how they were secured were shown. Armed with my new knowledge, I was able and confident enough to un-plug and reset the main power supply cables to the motherboard.

More in hope than expectation, I switched on. To my amazement the computer beeped and presented a picture.

By this time help had arrived and my nephew was able quickly to reconfigure the BIOS (**B**asic **I**nput **O**utput **S**ystem) to get things back to normal.

During the process of restoring normality the wireless communication between keyboard and computer overcame its bad mood and returned to typing keystrokes with impeccable behaviour.

It is a pleasure to watch an expert at work. There was even time for a little teach-in about the options available to manage my new home hub.

The next thing is to prepare for the club’s AGM a few days from now and worry about frozen conditions, making reports and recharging the committee.

