



Good quality listening is a passion of mine. I listen to music all the time. I have owned my car, a Dacia Duster, for a couple of years and have listened to the factory-standard system all this time as I waited for the right equipment and opportunity to come along.

This is my second Dacia Duster, and it features a 2-way component set that sounds significantly better than my previous one. But it still suffered from mushy mids, tinny highs, absent lows, and a minimal dynamic range. Something had to be done!

When I heard my favourite Audison Voce speakers were being replaced, I was worried, as their replacement needed to represent a massive improvement to avoid disappointment. I heard a pair in Italy in December 2024, and have been beside myself with anticipation ever since.

When, finally, a pair of Voce II's became available for my car, I was offered the opportunity to visit Source Sounds in Sheffield to have them installed, along with a Forza AF C 8.14 bit amplifier and an APBX 8AS active subwoofer. I do not live close to Source Sounds, but the proprietor, Paul Ellis, and his brother, Chris, and I go back a long way. I have long admired their work and have been fortunate enough to feature several of their cars in the magazine. Upon arrival, I was introduced to Tom, who would carry out the installation alongside Chris. Tom's journey is

extremely interesting. He is a music nut, plays Bass and Piano, has his own recording facility and studied music technology at Barnsley College. This is a stark contrast to the skill sets typically used for installation work. Tom's opening gambit was, "I love my job and I want you to get the best install possible." What a great start!

Tom found his way to Source at 18. He had picked up a car amplifier and needed it installed, and found Source through a Google search. As a result, he became a long-term customer. Source is a very close-knit company, and staff tend to stick around. Following COVID, they lost staff, and Paul asked Tom if he would like a job.

Tom, now 27, has music in his blood, which can only have come from his upbringing. Sure enough, he mentioned that his father was responsible for many of his musical influences.

The previous conversation I had with Chris was at a country show at Chatsworth House, a good few years ago. He had been questioning the obsession with DSP in car audio systems. His rationale was that crossovers, particularly on high-end speaker systems, are bespoke. They are designed with specific characteristics, which must be important. These characteristics cannot be easily replicated without extensive A/B testing, which would take considerable time. I asked him for an update. He has softened his view slightly but remains intrigued by the design effort that goes into passive

crossover networks, many of which are discarded during installation. However, he now has extensive experience with DSP and recognises its benefits, but only when it is in the hands of experts.

With introductions and catch-ups out of the way, it was time to take my car apart. Having grown up with a deep interest in cars, I have left that behind. To me, a car is a means of travelling from A to B. However, I am unable to do this without listening to music. The system is more important than the car, so watching the boys remove seats, door cards, lift carpets etc. does not worry me as

Tom & Chris stripping down the front doors



Tom getting everything ready for the install

Equipment list

AUDISON Forza AF C8.14 bit - DSP amplifier
AUDISON Voce II AV K6 S - 2-way components
AUDISON Prima APBX 8AS - Active subwoofer



OUT with the poor quality standard fit



IN with the high quality Audison VOCE II



Audison VOCE II AV K6 S

Tom fitting the front door Audison VOCE II AV K6 S woofers with Skinz sound deadening & Water Guard



I am experienced enough to know that Source would only ever do the best for their customers, so there is no need to panic.

Having two installers working simultaneously on the same job is magical, especially when they do it with such respect for one another. Paul even got involved when it transpired that one of the door cards had a broken support post from previous work on the car. This was meticulously fixed away from the car while Chris and Tom continued with the job at hand.

It is normal for installers to add sound-deadening to any doors being prepared for new speakers. However, Source not only did this but also the floor underneath the rear seat squab, the rear doors and the boot floor.

The standard tweeter positions are on the dashboard, firing upward. Some time was spent trying to accommodate the beautiful grilles supplied with the Voce II AVK 6 S II kit. Ultimately, it was determined that this would not be feasible without substantial fabrication work. Instead, it was decided to mount them behind the OEM grilles. A source of concern for me was the depth of the mounting cavity, which leaves the tweeters a distance below the surrounding dashboard surface. However, these are very special Audison tweeters, so any concerns were put to the back of my mind until listening.

“It is normal for installers to add sound-deadening to any doors being prepared for new speakers.”

The amplifier has been mounted under the driver's seat, and alongside it is the tiny Audison B-Con Bluetooth® streaming device. This was an ambitious install to undertake in a single day; however, the job was completed and ready for set-up by around 6:00p.m.

Tom had completed a cursory setup of crossover frequencies and filter curves, which he knew Paul preferred. He had set the tweeter crossover to 3.5kHz, which sounded high given the quoted frequency response of 1200Hz-40kHz. However, I would never question Paul's preferences and judgements on this. I have limited experience with car setup; more

“As expected, I was completely blown away.”

significantly, I have never heard a bad Source car! Tom sat in the driver's seat initially, but after about 10 minutes, Paul and Tom swapped seats. I was beside myself with excitement. I also noted that I couldn't hear anything coming from the car at all! After what seemed like a further 30 minutes of impatient pacing, I was invited to have a listen. As expected, I was completely blown away. Not only had Paul set the staging perfectly to my taste, but the overall balance of bass and mids, along with the subtle use of subwoofer, was also a perfect match for my sometimes pedantic ears.

Having lived with the system for only a few hours, I was still extremely impressed. Paul, as ever, was far more measured. He told me this was just the start and hinted at further improvements once the speakers were properly run in.

He was right, and the speakers did run in, but I now had a couple of seeds of doubt in my mind. Given the effort that went into designing the tweeters, I was concerned that the mounting position was compromising performance. I found the upper register a little less clear than I had expected. I played the system to Brian Parton at FOUR Car Audio, and he also felt that the high-frequency performance could be improved. He flicked off the OEM grilles from the tweeters, and the difference this made was significant. However, it wasn't necessarily better, but we were hearing more from the tweeters.

Living with it for a few more days, I was convinced that the high frequencies were too bright for my addled old ears, and so I returned to Source. As previously mentioned, I am not fussy about the look and feel of my cars. I had found a couple of tweeter pods in the original packaging of the Voce speakers. I had seen these utilised in an install in a Transit van (featured elsewhere in issue XIII), and having the tweeters closer to being on-axis may improve things. Paul was happy to oblige, despite concerns that the pods might look a little out of place. They do!

Paul and Tom made further setup tweaks with the tweeters in these new positions, and I left satisfied. I remained happy for a week or so, but was still finding the high frequencies somewhat tiring. By this time, I was wondering what the effect of using the Accordo software suite in my amplifier would have on overall sound.

I contacted Lee Preston, a technical guy at FOUR, who was happy to try an Accordo setup for me. This

Carl's Top Five Tunes



Walkin' in the Sun - Fink

Hey Now - London Grammar

Wristwatch - MJ Lenderman

Rainy Day, Dream Away - Jimmy Hendrix

50 Ways to Leave Your Lover - Paul Simon

involved strapping a high-quality, calibrated microphone to the car's headrest and running a sequence of routines while the software “listened” to the car's interior and made time-alignment, phase, and equalisation adjustments to find a more pleasing result.

I was more than happy with the result. The frequency balance is much better for me, and the sound is closer to my expectations. Some months later, I am still enjoying my system. Accordo is not necessarily a fix-all, and Sources initial filter settings were still utilised.

Further manual tweaks were made to fine-tune to my preference. For me, it has sorted out all the anomalies that were troubling me.

Huge thanks to everyone involved in this project so far. You will hear more about my Voce II journey in future club newsletters and articles. ○

Audison VOCE II AV K6 S complete kit

