

# “ PPP ”

## People for Proper Policing in North Wales

### Ex-traffic officer is making £1million a year out of courses for drivers who speed

By [Robert Mendick](#) Mail online on 03rd March 2009

A former traffic policeman is making a fortune running courses for drivers caught speeding.

Chris Howell, pictured, and his wife Philippa received a £1.3million dividend last year from DriveTech, a firm he set up after leaving [Thames Valley police](#).

Some drivers avoid three-point penalties by attending awareness courses.



Safety conscious: senior officers are concerned about the profits being generated by courses run by Chris Howell, seen here on DriveTech's website

DriveTech runs such classes - at £95 a person - for several forces.

**The Association of Chief Police Officers** said DriveTech had a good reputation but added it was 'deeply concerned' by the amount earned.

Pre-tax profits more than doubled to £2.6 million - 18 months after launching London's speed awareness scheme.

**Mr Howell's business is so successful he is now reckoned to be one of the highest paid ex-police officers in the country.**

'This scheme should not lay people a golden egg,' said **ACPO's Ian Aspinall, who is in charge of speed awareness courses nationally**, adding: 'It is all about community safety. This should not be about making money.'

**A spokesman for the Association of British Drivers**, a motorists' pressure group, said: '*People should not be getting rich on motorists driving marginally over the speed limit.*'

The DriveTech course is 90 minutes shorter than the current ACPO standardised model. At £95 it is also more expensive than many other four-hour training courses, which can cost as little as £60.

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The fee and length of course was set by the **London Safety Camera Partnership**, a body set up by **Transport for London**, the Met and others, to cut the number of accidents.

DriveTech receives a flat fee to run the courses although TfL refuses to say how much it is paid, citing confidentiality.

A TfL source pointed out all revenue, once the Drivetech fee is taken out, is invested in road safety schemes across London.

DriveTech runs courses for the Met, City of London police and **Thames Valley Police** as well as smaller forces in Northumbria, Derbyshire and Hampshire.

It paid a dividend to shareholders of almost **£1.3 million** for the year ending 1 March last year. Mr Howell and his wife Philippa own **98 per cent of DriveTech's shares**.

It is not clear what proportion of DriveTech's turnover and profits are derived from the safety courses.

The company also operates a fleet business, providing training to 'predominantly blue-chip clients' such as ICI and Sainsbury's as well as a driving school.

Mr Howell, 46, set up DriveTech in 1990 after **10 years at Thames Valley Police**, where he was a traffic officer based at Woodstock in Oxfordshire.

He now lives with his wife in a large detached home in a private road in Maidenhead, which he bought for £975,000 in 2007.

He recently bought DriveTech's headquarters in Crowthorne, Berkshire, for £650,000.

**Mr Aspinall, who runs ACPO's driver offender re-training scheme**, said: *'Every pound that goes elsewhere out of this initiative is a pound lost to road safety.'*

He pointed out that some forces used a not-for-profit company to run the speed awareness courses with any profits reinvested in road safety.

But he also emphasised that Drive-Tech had an excellent reputation for running speed awareness courses.

DriveTech said yesterday it had reinvested 'a significant amount of money' in supporting road safety initiatives over the past five years.

It also pointed out it had been running a 'very successful commercial business since November 1990' - long before speed awareness schemes were launched. The firm now employs 300 people.

TfL said speed awareness courses had been hugely successful since launching in the capital in August 2006.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1158441/Ex-traffic-officer-making-1million-year-courses-drivers-speed.html#ixzz0VthHcDSw>

<b>1998</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>DriveTech becomes a limited company</b></li><li>• <b>Thames Valley Driver Improvement Scheme launched</b></li></ul>
<b>2003</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Thames Valley Speed Awareness Scheme launched</b></li></ul>
<b>2004</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Thames Valley Rider Improvement Scheme launched</b></li></ul>
<b>2005</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Thames Valley Seat Belt Awareness Scheme launched</b></li></ul>

**The PPP comments ... When we read thro. Drive Tech's site we were 'surprised' how often 'Thames Valley' appeared (see above from their own history) A few minutes research revealed what we expected, Police force cronyism and opportunism arising from their abuse of the motorist .... So how did NWPF/PA decide to use this company..?**

**Several of our professional road safety members have attended these courses as OBSERVERS, they were not impressed and believe that are not only opportunistic money making schemes but more importantly they are real road safety educational opportunities wasted.**

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