



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

Safe Speed Founder Gives Up Life for Road Safety

The Safe Speed Campaign are greatly saddened, by the sudden death of the founder, Paul Smith, 52, on Thursday 13th December 2007. He had suffered a second heart attack in August, and was awaiting a triple bypass operation.

From an early age he stood out as a very bright chap, wanting to take things apart, rather than play with them, always wanting to learn. He was an extremely talented driver, and sought out the best tutors to obtain the best advice to improve his passion for driving. He occasionally challenged their advice, if he felt it was incorrect, and proved his points through engineering and physics knowledge. He made them think, and won their respect and admiration.

As a highly sought after computer electronics engineer, (80's), he was devoted to giving his clients the very best possible hardware and software developments. This led to several amazing and very advanced inventions of the time, which he has left to the World, whenever, it is ready for them. His lighting controller (with a colleague), is second to none.

His passion for engineering and art grew into computer generated images and animation, resulting in the Worlds best support group back in 1992 (Raytech BBS). He wrote 1000's of programs to make the entire system work. His computer programming talent was world class. This led into a very successful computer sales business, but this mass of work resulted in his first heart attack, and so he needed a change.

A chanced story about a lady whose life was ruined, all for the sake of a few speeding fines, saw him create one of the most respected and loved websites for driving ever created, www.safespeed.org.uk After spending 5000 hrs studying the Government statistics and conclusions on camera policy, it just did not add up. The more he looked, the more his concerns grew. It was wrong, unbelievable, he had to act, and so the creation of Safe Speed (2001), gave him the platform to put across his findings. The website grew rapidly, along with the many interviews on radio and TV. Gradually the press listened and the MP's questioned the current thinking. Paul was in his element, his greatest challenge, and he loved it. No matter how hard the Government tried, the more he stood up to the challenges.

Like Paul reiterated, "**First they ignore you, Then they mock you, Then they fight you, Then you win.**" (**Mahatma Gandhi**) He truly believed that he had all, but won. He sincerely hoped that proper road policy and research, were going to be back on the menu, and people would stop being killed. One man against overwhelming odds, running a campaign on a shoestring. He was proud - so very proud, as finally honesty was breaking through. His words were flying off the pages daily. The World knows of Paul Smith of Safe Speed.

And now Claire says "it is our turn, to develop Paul Smith's Safe Speed Campaign, from the solid foundation that Paul planted, so that all governments may never forget, that it is the people that they stand for, and it is our respect that they have to earn."

Paul Smith has surely saved lives, perhaps now he knows who. A unique, amazingly intelligent individual, a true gentleman, that the world may not see the like of again. His rapid ability to analyse,

unravel and reveal the core problems, of the DoT figures, and to communicate his findings so clearly, as well as provide reasoned arguments back to the Government, was outstanding, and will be a great loss to all those that honestly seek to improve road safety. His own Downing Street petition to scrap speed cameras and, without much help from the media, achieved 28,000 signatures. He was quoted by the New York Times as the best quote of the day (world-wide), and the Observer largely attributed him, to causing the Government, to have a moratorium on speed cameras.

His inescapable conclusion was "***We must return to proper Road Safety Policies, that gave us the safest roads in the World***" and argued vigorously, "***automated speed enforcements is neither safe or appropriate.***" and stated "***Speed Kills is too simplistic, other reasons must be looked at for the 'fatality gap'***" as Paul himself, called it. His pursuit of truth was relentless and ultimately hastened his own end. His world class sound bites and direct speech, made him not only a joy to listen to, but a man of reason with a passion for truth.

He is survived by his partner of 24 years, Claire Armstrong, who is equally passionate about safe driving and will continue to hold the Government to account for their failed road safety policies. Claire says "I will miss him forever, he was my soul mate, but his work will be developed and will continue to grow from strength to strength. The Safe speed Campaign has 1000's of supporters, around the Globe, and we will use the talents of many, to replace those that we came to rely on from Paul. He literally worked 'til he dropped, dying at his desk, doing what he loved, in the pursuit of truth to save lives. He will be sorely missed."

And in parting Paul recently created the 100 word Highway Code :
With every edition the Highway Code gets bigger. The latest edition recently published, has swelled to 133 pages. The Safe Speed campaign says that this 'bloat' is causing the essential safety messages to get lost and has produced their own version of the Highway Code in just 100 words.

Safe Speed's Highway Code in exactly 100 words:

Drive on the left.

Make sure you can see and be seen.

Keep a constant look out all around.

Be aware of signs and regulations and why they are there.

Be predictable.

Recognise and anticipate danger and keep clear space from it.

Always ensure that you can stop within the distance that you know is clear.

Develop your skills.

Give courtesy, co-operation and space to others. Don't obstruct them.

Never take risks, drive unfit or compete with others.

Safety is paramount and far more important than priority.

Take personal responsibility for your safety and the safety of those nearby.

Enjoy.

Safe Speed founder Paul Smith explained: "We're not seriously suggesting that the official Highway Code should be replaced with just 100 words of advice to drivers, but the reason we have done this is deadly serious. We need to point out to Department for Transport that they have lost sight of the

essential foundations of road safety, and their new Highway Code further loses sight of these foundations in a morass of rules."

"You cannot replace skilled human judgement with a rule book - however big it is - but that's exactly what Department for Transport is trying to do. Our Highway Code even includes things that the official version does not. For a start it reminds people that road use can be enjoyable. Without that enjoyment we wouldn't have the interest to develop the skills that safe use of the roads requires."

"Another problem is that the Highway Code tells us what to do, but not how to decide when it is safe. We need to recognise danger and develop our skills for that."

"We hope that these founding principles will help road users everywhere - not just drivers - to focus on what's important and stay out of trouble. Some of the statements may not be immediately obvious to inexperienced road users, but all the common crash causes are covered. When we get it right we don't crash - but in order to get it right we need the right beliefs, the right skills and the right attitude. When things go wrong - think back to your last incident - and you'll probably be able to recognise the cause of the incident in those 100 words. Did you fail to spot the danger? Did you take a risk knowingly? Were you unfit through tiredness, drink or drugs?. **Use this code, learn from your mistakes and use the roads as safely as you possibly can. It's enjoyable to do so."**

The PPP comments We endorse all the above comments about Paul Smith and his work and his clear and truthful summary of a highway code.

BAD SCIENCE is our enemy and the policies and political expediency and incompetence that follow it are the curse of our modern society in every field. Road safety, education, health and even the future of our planet and species are at risk.