

# “ PPP ” People for Proper Policing in North Wales

## Teen admits racing before crash that killed North Wales couple

Jun 13 2009 by Carl Butler, Daily Post

**A TEENAGER has admitted he was racing before his car crashed, killing two pensioners.**

**Retired police officer Eric Townsend, 85, and his wife Marie, 83, a retired nurse, both died after the crash on Mold bypass on December 5 last year.**

**David Grant Hirst, 18, faced two counts of causing death by driving his Vauxhall Corsa dangerously on the A494 bypass between the Wylfa and New Brighton roundabouts. He collided with the Townsend's Ford Focus. Hirst, of Moel Gron, Mynydd Isa, near Mold, pleaded guilty to both counts at Mold Crown Court yesterday.**

**Karl Scholz, prosecuting, said: “The plea entered by Hirst is on the written basis which suggests that such racing that took place was confined to a period of no more than one minute, the distance from the Shell Garage (New Brighton) and the collision. The evidence in the prosecution case indicates it may have been taking place considerably longer. At this stage I simply remark it is not acceptable.”**

**Judge Huw Davies QC ordered pre-sentence reports on Hirst and said sentencing would take place as soon as possible. He added: “Someone who pleads guilty to this kind of offence is facing the inevitability of a custodial sentence.” Hirst had his unconditional bail renewed.**

Mr Townsend was in the police service for 30 years, 25 of them with the Metropolitan force in London. On his retirement in 1971, the couple moved to Ruthin, where Mr Townsend was well known as a civilian counter worker at Ruthin police station.

**Ricky James Challinor, 19, of Bryn Awelon, Buckley, faces two charges of causing death by dangerous driving on the Mold by-pass on December 5. He has pleaded not guilty to both charges and has been released on unconditional bail. His car was not involved in the collision that killed Eric and Margie Townsend. His trial will take place at Mold Crown Court on September 7.**

**The PPP comment ....this type of driving behaviour is common on the roads of North Wales and the whole UK. North Wales Police were very unlikely to deal with the issue until AFTER a tragedy like this one. But the death of these elderly drivers would be used as an excuse to use mobile speed cameras where they knew safe and often elderly drivers might just exceed a posted speed limit. The CPS and magistrates and all the faceless, nameless so called partners in ‘Arrive Alive’ colluded in this abusive and dishonest practice. They should be held accountable for their part in the conspiracy and for their neglect over 8 years in preventing these tragedies.**

**As usual we ask WHY has it taken over 6 months to bring this case to a semi-conclusion?, we still await the sentence. This makes all the deceased's' friends and relations relive the tragedy.**