



**15 September 2008**

## **MILESTONE IN DRIVER EDUCATION**

**More than 100,000 speeding drivers in Avon and Somerset have now chosen to attend a Speed Choice workshop to avoid penalty points on their licence.**

The vast majority have rated the courses as good or very good – with 96 per cent saying they believed their driving had improved as a result of attending the workshop.

Speed Choice was launched in 2003 – one of the first driver education programmes in the country - to reduce deaths and injuries in local roads.

The three-hour workshops, which are held at Cribbs Causeway, Keynsham and Taunton, are designed to bring drivers up to date with current legislation and make them more aware of a range of road safety issues, particularly the potential dangers of excessive speed.

They also highlight the responsibility drivers have for the speed of their vehicle and the safety of themselves, their passengers and other road users.

Driver education manager Richard Fairhurst said: “Changing driver attitudes and behaviour is a key factor in helping to reduce collisions and casualties on our roads.

“As a result of the introduction of Speed Choice five years ago, 100,000 people have now gained three hours of driver education that they otherwise would not have had. I am sure that must have made an extremely positive contribution to road safety in our area.”

Mr Fairhurst said: “Many of those who have attended a Speed Choice course have told us that, despite initial doubts, they had found the sessions extremely useful and what they learned had changed their approach to driving.”

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Comments made by some drivers who have attended the Speed Choice workshop, in the assessment questionnaire or by letter, include -

- “Taught me more than 3 points would have”
- “Like most people I thought this would be an easy, possibly boring way not to get 3 points on my licence. But I was wrong! It was fun, informative and really made sense – I feel I am a better driver for it”
- “The workshop has boosted my confidence and made me more aware of hazards when driving”
- “Best 3 hours of training that I have ever attended”
- “Excellent learning experience that every driver should attend”

Currently, Speed Choice workshops are offered only to the so called “low end speeders” – those who are just over the 30mph limit.

However, there are plans to expand the scope of the workshops to include those who exceed 40mph and 50mph limits.

Speed Choice has expanded its range of driver education programmes and no longer focuses solely on those caught exceeding a speed limit.

According to Government statistics, a third of all serious and fatal road traffic incidents involve someone who was at work at the time.

Speed Choice is offering to support businesses, large and small, that employ drivers or where driving is part of an employee’s tasks, by running road safety awareness courses for staff.

It has delivered its Managing Driver Safety courses to a number of major companies and organisations in the region.

Further information on Speed Choice and the range of courses it offers can be found on its website [www.speedchoice.org.uk](http://www.speedchoice.org.uk)

**ENDS**

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