

Press release: Driver who killed best friend now jailed

A driver who killed his best friend will now serve time in prison after Solicitor General Robert Buckland QC MP referred his original sentence to the Court of Appeal as unduly lenient.

Stephen Whilde, 24, was driving his modified car 20 mph over the speed limit when he failed to negotiate a right hand bend, causing the vehicle to crash into a hedgerow. A piece of wooden fence struck the passenger, William Bye, 24, killing him.

The passenger was filming the drive leading up to the crash in November 2016. The footage was used by police and prosecutors.

Whilde was originally sentenced to 2 years in custody, suspended for 2 years last November at Shrewsbury Crown Court. The Court of Appeal quashed his suspended sentence and replaced it with an immediate 3 year prison sentence. Whilde has also been disqualified from driving for 4 and a half years.

Whilde has been ordered to surrender to Shrewsbury Police Station by 4pm today .

Speaking after the hearing, the Solicitor General said:

This was a sad example of deliberate, very dangerous driving that has caused the death of a young man and devastated a family.

I feel the increased sentence better reflects the seriousness of the offence and I hope this will provide some comfort to the family at this very difficult time.