

The Motor Ombudsman extends accreditation to all Harwoods Group car dealerships and Repair Centres

- **Harwoods Group's 14 car sales and repair locations across the South of England are now accredited to The Motor Ombudsman's Motor Industry Codes of Practice**
- **Latest agreement builds on four Harwoods businesses that have been committed to the Service and Repair, and Vehicle Sales Codes since 2016**
- **Motor Ombudsman accreditation gives Harwoods Group several benefits, and customers the reassurance that businesses are committed to high standards of service and workmanship beyond those required by law**

London, 22 January 2019 The Motor Ombudsman, *the* automotive dispute resolution provider, is pleased to announce that Harwoods Group, the long-established and family-owned retailer of luxury vehicles, has successfully extended its Motor Industry Codes of Practice accreditation to all of their South of England-based car franchise locations and Accident Repair Centres.

The agreement sees a further eight Harwoods dealerships commit to the comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes for Service and Repair and Vehicle Sales. Representing brands such as Aston Martin, Bentley and Jaguar across the counties of Sussex, Kent and Hampshire, they join the Harwoods Audi showrooms in Billingshurst, Portsmouth and Southampton, and Land Rover dealer in Basingstoke, which have been accredited to both Codes since 2016. In addition, the Harwoods Accident Repair Centres in Crawley and Southampton now adhere to the Service and Repair Code as part of the latest phase of accreditation.

Being signed up to the Code of Practice for Service and Repair, as well as that for Vehicle Sales (the only Code of its kind to cover both new and used cars), gives Harwoods' businesses several benefits. These include having individual profile pages on The Motor Ombudsman's easy-to-navigate online Garage Finder (TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder), being able to display the trusted Motor Ombudsman and Approved Code logos at their premises and on marketing collateral for added customer peace of mind, having access to the body's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service to help conclude customer disputes outside of the courtroom, and being able to participate in online training modules on key legislation.

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of The Motor Ombudsman, said: "We are pleased to welcome Harwoods' full portfolio of car showrooms and Accident Repair Centres to our accredited business network. As the leading automotive retail group in the South, we are proud to have them on board. It reaffirms the value that the group places in being aligned to the requirements of our Codes of Practice, whilst equally enjoying unlimited access to our team of experts. We look forward to continuing to support businesses in the Harwoods Group and assisting them with their requirements."

Archie Harwood, Chief Executive of Harwoods Group, added: "Expanding our accreditation to encompass every car retail location and Accident Repair Centre within our group, gives our customers the important reassurance that we are committed to delivering the highest standards of work and service, a promise which lies at the heart of our brand. Furthermore, The Motor Ombudsman is an important source of information and guidance for our businesses, allowing them to continue to implement best practice across their organisation, and to ultimately give motorists the best possible experience at Harwoods."

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Notes to editors

About The Motor Ombudsman

The Motor Ombudsman is *the* automotive dispute resolution body. Fully impartial, it is the first ombudsman to be focused solely on the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Thousands of businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.

For more information on The Motor Ombudsman, visit www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org

About The Motor Industry Code of Practice for Vehicle Sales

The Vehicle Sales Code provides guidelines on the sale of both new and used cars, as well as the supply of finance and warranties. Any independent garages or franchised dealers who adhere to the Vehicle Sales Code are voluntarily agreeing to operate to the highest standards during the sale of new and used vehicles and when offering associated products and services.

The Vehicle Sales Code covers nine different areas. These include the transparent wording of adverts and pricing, clear and transparent invoicing, and the sale of a used car which is supported by a vehicle provenance check to ensure that it has not been stolen, written-off and is free of any outstanding finance payments. It also highlights that retailers should provide test drives, avoid high-pressure selling techniques, supply accurate advice on warranty and finance products, and deliver a vehicle with a full handover, complete with all historic documentation, the entire service history and a valid MOT certificate. Independent garages and franchised dealers accredited to the Vehicle Sales Code are listed on The Motor Ombudsman's Garage Finder (TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder).

About The Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair

The Service and Repair Code is designed to ensure that consumers receive an honest and fair service when visiting a Motor Ombudsman-accredited business' premises for work or repairs on their car. Commitments made by garages who are signed up to the Code include the use of honest and accurate advertising as well as open and transparent pricing, employing qualified staff that act in the customer's best interests, and having a swift complaints handling process in place should something go wrong. Independent garages and franchised dealers accredited to the Service and Repair Code are listed on The Motor Ombudsman's Garage Finder (www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/garage-finder).

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About Harwoods Group

Founded in 1931 by Wally Harwood, and employing over 900 people, Harwoods is a privately owned automotive retail group based on the south coast of England, serving customers across Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and beyond. An established family business with a reputation for high standards, it is a trusted partner of Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, Jaguar and Land Rover, providing a suite of models to suit all lifestyles and requirements.

For more information on Harwoods Group, visit www.harwoods.uk.com

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