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TUNBRIDGE WELLS DEALER NAMED BEST SMALL TYRE RETAILER IN THE UK

- Family business Freeway Exhaust and Tyre Centre wins national award for its commitment to customers and the local community
- Business owner of 15 years “absolutely over the moon”
- Michelin says the tyre dealership has “true star quality”

Tunbridge Wells-based Freeway Exhaust and Tyre Centre has been named Small Tyre Retailer of the Year.

The hotly contested award recognised the family-run business as being the best single site tyre dealer in the UK and was presented at the National Tyre Distributors Association (NTDA) Awards held this month at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham.

Based in St John’s Road, Freeway has been serving the local community for nearly 50 years and is a member of the Michelin Quality Centre network.

Owner Dave Scotton started with the firm in 1977, gaining the experience that would help him to take ownership with his wife, Maria, in 2006. Today it’s a true family venture, with eldest daughter Anne-Marie employed as Marketing Director, and youngest daughter Kristina now a Director and taking a growing role in the company.

Commenting on the win, Dave says: “We are absolutely over the moon. After everything that has been happening with the pandemic, it’s a fantastic boost for the whole team.”

Freeway was able to stay open throughout the 2020 and 2021 lockdowns and the company is proud of the work it’s done, including staying open late to mend a nurse’s car so she could make her shift – and fixing a customer’s flat tyre at home so they could take a family member to hospital.

“We really went out of our way to go to people’s houses if they were stranded during lockdown – all at no extra cost,” he explains. “We were



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happy to do our bit. I get a buzz out of doing good – it’s what’s important to me in life.”

The award was collected on behalf of the team by Kristina, in front of an audience of several hundred senior industry figures from the tyre industry.

Speaking at the awards, Stefan Hay, NTDA Chief Executive, said: “The judges felt that Freeway Exhaust and Tyre Centre had gone above and beyond to demonstrate its commitment to its customers, employees, suppliers and the wider community it serves.

“It was clear that the business ethics the family adheres to have been disseminated across the entire team, resulting in Freeway being both a productive and highly professional place to work and to do business with. The NTDA is delighted to have Freeway as an Association member.”

Andy Aylward, Michelin’s National Sales Manager B2C – Territories, says: “Dave’s got generations of customers where the parents used to come in to get their cars fixed when he was working there as a young lad. Now they’re sending their kids and grandkids along to him, on the back of years of trusted service.”

Justin Curtis, Michelin Territory Business Manager, says: “This is a family setting the benchmark for how to run an independent tyre dealership. It’s why we invited them to be a Michelin Quality Centre in the first place; they have always had true star quality in our eyes.”

Freeway employs a team of 14 staff from its one-acre site, which is home to eight vehicle bays, fitting tyres and carrying out repairs and MOTs on cars and light vans. It stocks around 3,000 tyres, including budget, mid-range and premium brands.

About Michelin:

Michelin, the leading mobility company, is dedicated to enhancing its clients’ mobility, sustainably; designing and distributing the most suitable tyres, services and solutions for its clients’ needs; providing digital services, maps and guides to help enrich trips and travels and make them unique experiences; and developing high-technology materials that serve a variety of industries. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has 123,600 employees and operates 71 tyre



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production facilities which together produced around 170 million tyres in 2020. www.michelin.com

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