

THE ROYAL TREATMENT

Kelly Dalwood took a trip to Motorcare in Royal Tunbridge Wells to visit a bodyshop, and didn't want to come home.

Motorcare is an impressive 17,000 sq ft of bodyshop heaven. Tucked away in a leafy business park (yes, leafy) in Royal Tunbridge Wells, this bodyshop would knock the socks off the average punter on the street who still associates the world of body repair and car painting with a back street garage.

It's difficult to sum up the Motorcare attitude... driven and determined, yes, passionate and knowledgeable, very, obsessive about perfection, certainly.

Heading up a team of 18 staff is Mark Humphreys, Director, who has built up the business from a small rental premises locally to a new freehold site. Mark is ably assisted by Colin Plumb, Bodyshop Manager and Giovanni Fattorusso.

With a client base that includes some A list celebrities, sports stars, bankers and Canary Wharf's high flyers, it's no wonder that everything from the reception area to the collection bay is impressive.

Now for the list of vehicle manufacturer approvals: Mercedes-Benz, VW, Audi, Lotus, Nissan and Nissan GTR, Chrysler, Smart, Skoda, Jeep, Lexus, Seat and Renault. In addition, Motorcare specialises in Maserati, Porsche, Aston Martin, Bentley, Jaguar, BMW and AMG Brabus. As you can imagine, the courtesy car fleet is impressive, including five

Jaguar X-types. Not a Jaguar fan? Customers can choose from a Mercedes-Benz C-Class or a 5-Series BMW instead.

The business is split over two sites – one side handling the prestige marquees, the other repairing more mainstream vehicles and light commercials. The benefit for the drivers of those less prestige motors is they are guaranteed the same level of technical competence and repair quality as the Porsches and Ferraris, the expertise and care is carried right through the Motorcare business.

Prestige

Work is steady at Motorcare with dealerships sending work, a specialist insurance approval in place, and existing delighted customers recommending the bodyshop every time. But, as Colin Plumb said, 'one good insurance approval for prestige work would be perfect'.

'In return, we can offer a prestige insurer a hassle-free alternative to non-fault car hire,' said Colin. 'We're looking at investing in brand new Mercedes-Benz C Class cars to offer non-fault drivers free-of-charge to the insurance company, to attract a good insurance approval.'

After moving to the premises just over a year ago, the Motorcare team enlisted the help of David Utting from David Utting Engineering to help audit

the site and design the workshop layout, centered around the spraybooths and aluminium repair bay. 'Motorcare is a superbly efficient, state-of-the-art workshop and the results speak for themselves,' said Colin.

They definitely do; everything inside the bodyshop shouts quality, from the energy efficient lighting, David Utting XP1200 booths and Pro-Align's 4-wheel alignment, Stanners welders, and Celette jigs, investment has been significant. An estimated £2million plus, in fact.

When you've got the best kit, you need the best technicians. Each and every member of the Motorcare team are highly skilled and have proven competence when it comes to repairing various makes of vehicles. All technicians receive continual training, from Audi specialist courses in Germany, to Nissan GTR driver coaching and certification in Paris.



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Motorcare has also clocked on to the benefits of supplier product and process training. 'Getting the maximum performance from everything we use in here helps us achieve the best results,' said Colin. This is led by Body and Paint, who Motorcare rely on for expert advice and practical product demonstrations. 'Lee Howard, Body and Paint's MD, and his team work very closely with our guys to make sure we're always ahead of the game when it comes to the latest products, training and techniques,' said Colin. 'Alongside Body and Paint, Mirka Abrasives delivers technical training to ensure the best product performance, and John Stanners from Stanners Equipment carries out all of our welding training. With the help of our suppliers, we maximise efficiency and get great results everytime.'

Quality

While other repairers focus on hours sold and high volumes, Giovanni said Motorcare is on a one-track road: quality. 'We're all about quality here,' he said, 'get that right and everything else falls into place.'

When this means turning out at an unearthly hour to do a handover that suits one of his VIPs, Giovanni's there. 'We pride ourselves for offering the type of concierge service that many of our

clients have become accustomed to. Exceeding expectations is something every member of the Motorcare team knows how to deliver.'

So how do you keep some of the UK's most demanding clients happy when they've just smashed their pride and joy? A full accident management service is provided, with replacement prestige vehicles, is provided by Performance Car Hire (PCH). 'The service from PCH is second to none and the costs to insurers are fair and transparent,' said Colin. 'Some insurance companies are shocked when they receive an invoice for the hire of an Audi R8 that's at a fair rate.'

Sexy

The list of vehicles repaired, refinished and gleaming, ready and waiting in the customer collection bay reads like James Bond's car inventory: a bright orange Porsche 997 GT3 RS, a very sexy, black Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder and a stunning Aston Martin DB S. If Motorcare had a tagline, what would it be? Something like: 'Going the extra mile' – especially as part of the QC process, offering to 'road test the vehicles before handing them back'. If Motorcare is ever short of a driver to road test that Porsche, count me in! ■