

AA Cars launches 'Approved Dealers' to offer 'safest place to buy a used car'

- **9 out of 10 buyers 'confident buying from an AA dealer'**
- **78% of drivers say they have plans to change their car**
- **AA inspects all cars in Approved Dealer programme**

AA Cars has today (06 February) launched its 'Approved Dealer' standard for dealers on its innovative on-line used car search website, www.theAAcars.com, in its continued bid to boost consumer trust.

Independent dealers must offer AA car inspections (or Franchise approved inspections) of all their used cars stock as well as signing up to the AA's 10-point Dealer Promise,⁽¹⁾ before they can benefit from the trust associated with AA Approved Dealer status. Franchised dealers already offering inspections and customer guarantees can join the Approved Dealer programme.

Edmund King, AA president, says: "The launch of 'Approved Dealer' is the most important advance by AA Cars since the launch of Dealer Promise last year and it really taps in to the trust associated with the AA brand."⁽²⁾

"[Approved Dealer](#)" confirms to buyers that they can purchase a car with absolute confidence, knowing that not only has it been inspected, but is backed with a ten-point Dealer Promise that means in the unlikely event of something going wrong, there is a robust means of sorting problems out quickly.

"AA Approved Dealers really are the safest place to buy a used car."

King points out that vehicles which have had an AA inspection are 22% more likely to be viewed online than those that have not. "Our research⁽³⁾ shows that almost all buyers (92%) say they would prefer to buy an inspected car, while nine out of 10 (86%) feel they would be reassured if their dealer is associated with the AA."

Paul Yates, managing director of AA Cars says that if a car buyer is able to see an inspection report, nearly three-quarters (73%) are likely to make a quick buying decision.

“What’s more, with an inspection report available, most buyers (68%) would accept the forecourt price without quibbling.”

Yates adds that first impressions are vital for buyers, pointing out that nearly two-thirds (62%) will do their initial online research and then turn up unannounced at a dealership.

“So AA Approved Dealers can use a range of AA branding both online, which will help to attract buyers; and at their premises including point-of-sale materials such as window stickers and car headboards, leaflets, showroom banners and advertising.”

Yates points out that the AA has been providing benchmark mechanical vehicle inspections for more than 90 years.⁽⁴⁾ Currently, an inspection includes 128 ‘pass or fail’ checks carried out both statically and on-the-road, meaning any faults can be corrected before the car is put on sale.

“For dealers, this means customers are much less likely to return a car for a refund or repair (their choice) within 30 days, under the Consumer Rights Act,⁽⁵⁾ if they can show beyond reasonable doubt that a fault was present at the time of delivery,” he says.

“An AA Vehicle Inspection will help to avoid that possibility.”

Yates agrees that dealers are primarily focused on increasing sales leads. “But lead generation is much more likely if the sales process is based on the solid foundation of reputation and trust. Key to that is honesty and transparency.

“Because of the additional requirement to sign up to and abide by the AA’s 10-point [Dealer Promise](#), I believe the concept will attract new dealers who want to enhance their reputation.

“The Approved Dealer standard is creating the safest places to buy a used car. It’s the ultimate progression from our existing 10-point Dealer Promise, launched last year, which is essentially a customer service commitment. Fundamental to the process is adding car inspections to these approved standards of conduct.

“This all adds up to an industry-leading concept.

“We want to work with our dealers to ensure that, first and foremost, this is what they offer their customers.”

The launch of AA Approved Dealer comes at a time when additional new research from the AA⁽⁶⁾ shows that more than three-quarters of drivers (78%) have plans to change their car – compared with just over half (54%) last year. A quarter (27%) will do so within 12 months.

“There is much greater car buying confidence in the market than last year. We’re offering dealers the opportunity to ride the crest of this wave by providing them with the tools to ensure they can not only maximise their sales but build customer loyalty too.”

Dealers looking to become an AA Approved Dealer should go to <https://www.vcars.co.uk/approved-dealers-trade.php> or telephone 01920 877750.

Ends/more

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- (1) The 10-point Promise – launched last year – includes a range of basic expectations such as a minimum six-month MoT, proper management of paperwork, free car history, 12-months AA breakdown cover, an audit by the AA once per year and, fundamentally, a way for customers to escalate any issues or problems through an AA Cars mediation service: full details - <https://www.vcars.co.uk/dealer-promise.php>
- (2) AA was voted the ‘UK’s Most Trusted Brand’: 2 January-4 February 2014 Rainey Kelley Campbell Roalfe / Y&R’s BradAsset Valuator
- (3) AA conducted a survey among 18,744 customers in December 2016, achieving a 7.4% response rate
- (4) AA started carrying out car inspections in 1920 when the price was 2 guineas (£2.2s.0d. or today, £2.10)
- (5) Consumer Rights Act: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-rights-act-2015/consumer-rights-act-2015>
- (6) Populus questioned 17,979 AA members between 13-20 December. Populus is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

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