

## Slough car washes awarded first accreditation in licensing pilot backed by Home Office

The Responsible Car Wash Scheme ([RCWS](#)) has today awarded the first government-backed accreditation for car washes demonstrating compliance in employment, environmental and premises law.

Waves car wash and Pro Touch Valeting, both in Slough, applied for accreditation following a visit from the RCWS as part of a Home Office funded pilot to test licensing for car washes. Both sites will now display a RCWS sticker and banner, assuring drivers they will receive a fair wash when visiting.

Teresa Sayers, managing director, RCWS said: “These accreditations are a landmark in our goal to see car washes across the UK offer a fair wash for all – fair to their workers, their customers and to the environment. Both of these car washes have proven to be adhering to the RCWS code of practice\* in full and meeting their employment, environmental and premises obligations. Businesses in Slough have been very receptive to the scheme and we have other applications coming through, so I am sure these will be the first of many accreditations.”

Joanna Graham, CEO of Waves Car Wash said: “We fully support the RCWS and were very keen to gain accreditation as soon as possible. We hope that this scheme encourages other car washes in the area (and more widely) to ensure they comply with the law and that it also helps customers to make an informed choice about where they get their car cleaned.”

The pilot started on May 10<sup>th</sup> with visits by the RCWS to 20 car washes in Slough with the assistance of Local Council, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and Thames Valley Police. The aim of the initial visits was to inform car wash businesses of the scheme and encourage applications for accreditation. These visits have been followed up with further communication with each car wash.

The hand car wash sector has consistently been identified as an industry where workers are at risk of exploitation ranging from poor working conditions to modern day slavery. Legitimate businesses are often undercut by those breaking the law, creating an unfair competitive landscape.

\*RCWS Accreditation requires the operator to meet and abide by the **Code of Practice** in full:

- Consent to Trade and Trading Standards
- Financial Transparency and Corporate Governance
- Providing Safe and Hygienic Working Conditions
- Protecting the Environment
- Compliant and Ethical Employment Practices and prevention of worker exploitation

**About RCWS** <https://rcws.org.uk/>

The Responsible Car Wash Scheme (RCWS) is a not-for-profit organisation founded to promote compliance and raise standards in the car wash industry. It aims to be a positive force in improving conditions for workers and upholding their statutory rights. Launched in October 2018 at the House of Lords, the scheme has the backing of National and Local Government, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, the Police, the Health and Safety Executive, Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs, the Environment Agency and the charity Unseen, all of whom have assisted in its development.

**About the Waves Group** <https://wavescarwash.co.uk/>

- The Waves Group is a privately-owned company established in 2006. Operating from purpose-built car wash centres Waves trades 280 car washes across the UK principally for major supermarkets. We serve around 3m customers per year and the franchise network employs 2,000 people
- Waves has campaigned for years to raise wider awareness of modern slavery, preventing labour exploitation in the sector and increasing consumer awareness of these issues. In addition, we make significant and ongoing investment in proprietary technology, people and operating processes to safeguard the welfare of car wash workers on our network.



*Franchisee Akbar Mirza, CEO of Waves Joanna Graham and Councillor Balvinder Bains*



*Pro Touch Valeting Manager Deler Jamal and Councillor Balvinder Baines*