

Trust My Garage

Consumer Code Audit

23rd April 2026

Background information

The Trust My Garage (TMG) Code of Practice is sponsored by the Independent Garages Association (IGA) and administered by Retail Motor Industry Standards & Certification (RMISC). First established in 1976, it has been revised over the years to reflect new legislation and the implementation of best practice identified from feedback from both members and customers.

On becoming members businesses make a commitment to consumers regarding the provision of service, warranty and repair of Vehicles. Membership of the Code is open only to Independent Garage Association members.

RMISC was established by the RMIF as a subsidiary company to provide certification services and is a completely independent entity. Because of this independence, RMISC has been appointed by IGA to administer the code.

Audit Process

The on-site audit was carried out by two Trading Standards Practitioners from the Chartered Trading Standards Institute on 23rd April 2026.

The audit focused on the following areas:-

- Member application process, including checks carried out on prospective members
- Member auditing-content and process, including general compliance with the code, staff training and dealing with consumer complaints
- Sanctions for non-compliant members
- Marketing and advertising by member businesses - terms & conditions and pre-contractual information, including cancellation rights, deposits, delivery times and guarantees and warranties
- Customer service provisions, including support for vulnerable consumers
- Consumer complaints process, including ADR

- Customer satisfaction, information / complaints from enforcement agencies and how this information is used to develop and improve the code

Audit Summary

The audit examined: -

- The initial application process
- Re-audits
- The process for businesses who resign as a member
- The monitoring processes

Member Application Process

At end of December 2025 TMG had 3077 members, an increase of 77 members in the previous 12 months. There have been 268 new applications since the last audit.

IGA members can apply to join the TMG scheme, free of charge. At the application stage TMG carries out an on-site Code audit.

Any issues raised during the initial audit are discussed with the garage owner/manager and noted on the audit form. The owner/manager and auditor then both sign off the audit form including any agreed recommendations. TMG will support new applicants to get through the audit.

Any applicant whose first audit receives a score of less than 85% will be advised of the areas for improvement and is revisited after 12 weeks. If the business scores less than 85% again, then another 12-week period is allowed to enable them to address the issues. If the improvements are not implemented and the score remains below 85% then the application is refused.

A failed application was reviewed during the audit. Applicants will always receive a re-visit after a failure to assess the changes that have been made, other than where the issues relate to documentary evidence.

Existing Member Inspections/Audit

The RMI's audit arm, RMI Standards and Certification (RMISC) carry out the audits to assess compliance of the TMG code. The audit team are all employed by RMISC, they also audit for other schemes including the new UKAS accredited Security-related Repair Maintenance Scheme, MOT garages, BS10125.

Members are audited when they first join the scheme to assess their suitability. Then TMG's monitoring commitment is to re-audit members on a five-year cycle. In the 12 months to 29.12.25 a total of 480 audits were completed, 225 were audits of new members (all on-site) and 255 re-audits were carried out, with 114 of these being remote.

Existing members are re-audited on a random basis or if there have been any issues highlighted by customer complaints, feedback or any other source. Since November 2024, TMG have been trialling remote compliance audits. Members are required to submit documents for review prior to the audit. The audit is carried out on Teams/Zoom, whatever platform suits the member, with the member showing aspects of their premises to the auditor on request via the camera. TMG are monitoring the effectiveness of these remote audits, currently they believe that they are effective. If they are satisfied with the results and the members find them acceptable, they will increase the number carried out into 2026/2027.

Across all 480 audits, 469 audits scored between 85% and 100% with just 11 failed audits with scores of below 85%.

Several audit reports were reviewed during the audit.

Membership Withdrawal and Sanctions for Non-Compliant Member Businesses

There is a process for the removal of non-compliant members, but TMG has not had cause to use the procedure this year.

Since the last audit, 197 members have left the scheme. When members leave the scheme, they receive an exit letter closing their membership, which includes instructions on removing all references to TMG and CTSI. A month after their membership has ceased, the company's online presence is checked to ensure that any references to TMG and CTSI have been removed. In addition, the TMG Field Team are made aware of all members that have left and will visit them if they are in the area, to check that all references to TMG have been removed. TMG have never needed to escalate this issue once a site visit has taken place.

Details were made available of correspondence with members who have left the Code.

Marketing and Advertising by Member Businesses

When members join, they are provided with information outlining best practice in making use of their logo and the CTSI logo. Members are provided with information to inform their staff of their obligations under the Code, along with access to an information video and downloadable resources from the website. In the members' area of the TMG website, there are suggestions for marketing material that can be downloaded. Telephone advice is available via the member's helpline, with face-to-face assistance via the auditing team.

TMG maintain their evaluations of member's online presence. A monthly random sample of five members are chosen and their marketing of the Code is reviewed.

The five member's websites and/or Facebook/Twitter pages are checked for the following:-

- ADR text and details
- CTSI logo
- TMG logo

- Any consumer facing advice

Following the review, if it is felt that the member could benefit from some advice then an email is sent with the TMG Marketing Toolkit attached and includes links to the TMG website where the member can find tips on improving their online presence. The data acquired via this review is used to formulate policy and provide relevant advice to all members as appropriate.

Terms and Conditions and other Pre-Contractual Information

Model terms and conditions are available on the Members Only section of the TMG website. Terms and conditions are assessed at audit and if deemed not suitable it is suggested that members use the model document.

Customer Service Provisions

In previous years the most common non-compliance had been the lack of a complaints-log. TMG have produced a document that the auditors supply to members to use as a complaints log, this has produced a small improvement.

Consumer Complaints Process

All complaints raised under the Code go directly to the National Conciliation Service (NCS), a CTSI Approved ADR provider. The service provided by NCS is free for consumers, independent from outside influences and provides advice, mediation, arbitration, and if required adjudication. Trust My Garage and the IGA is not involved and remains independent from the complaint and conciliation process.

In 2025, 53 complaints have been handled for TMG by NCS. Of the 53 complaints, 10 were found in favour of the consumer, 6 closed as a compromise, and 37 were found in favour of the garage.

Customer Satisfaction and Feedback

TMG provide stickers to be attached to invoices and posters to display in public areas encouraging customers to leave reviews on the TMG website. The online review form contains five yes/no questions and one multiple choice question. Since the last audit 477 reviews have been left.

The aggregate of the answers creates a star rating for the garage on the TMG website. Search for garages on the TMG website are between 300 – 450 per month, with 50 – 70 of these leading to a booking.

When customers enter feedback, the information is collated and stored automatically in the system. The TMG admin staff can then produce statistics allowing Management Information to be produced.

To reduce the risk of non-legitimate feedback being added to the system all feedback is reviewed. Anything which appears to be suspect is flagged and an investigation carried out with the member. If they are deemed to be a genuine customer, the feedback remains, otherwise it is removed. Any very bad reviews or members with lots of 100% satisfaction reviews are checked.

During the audit, in view of how the TMG website displays consumer reviews, the Competition and Markets Authority's current focus on how reviews are collected, moderated and presented was discussed. TMG will be considered a publisher for the purposes of the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024.

Recommendation

TMG are advised to review how testimonials and customer feedback are displayed particularly in relation to transparency and completeness.

In the 12 months to 31/12/25:

In response to the question -

How important is it to you that the garage is a Trust My Garage member?

73% of respondents answered Important, Very Important or "I will only use a Trust My Garage Member" - this is the same as last year's figure.

Are you satisfied that the garage only carried out necessary or quoted work?

84% responded YES - this is a continuing decrease, 2% lower than last year's figure.

Are you likely to use this garage again?

82% responded YES, again a decrease from last year.

Conclusions

TMG continues to carry out its functions as a Code sponsor. The details provided during the on-site audit were comprehensive.

TMG has held seven members events in the last 12 months providing updates for members on systems, legislation changes, government lobbying etc.

There has been a slow but continued decrease in customer satisfaction, this should be reviewed and appropriate action taken.