News – Uncle Tom’s welcomed to First Stop family

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Above: Laurence Nicholls of Uncle Tom's Motorist Centre, Harlow.

Uncle Tom's Motorist Centre joins First Stop…

The First Stop fast fit network is continuing to accelerate ahead with expansion plans across

the UK, after welcoming Uncle Tom's Motorist Centre to the family.

The Harlow based garage is a motoring mainstay in the community, with Laurence Nicholls boasting 45 years of experience in the industry.

His said that the decision to become a First Stop partner would enable his business to

continue improving, with even more strings to its bow than before.

He said: "Becoming a First Stop member will give us access to new information and a

greater scope for buying direct. Their relationship with such a premium brand as

Bridgestone is also a strong selling-point, with the strength of the national network also providing a number of benefits to us".

Laurence went on to reflect on an enduring career in the automotive industry, but said that his best years were still ahead of him.

"I started when I was 13 years old, when I was working as a tea boy. Within a year I'd moved on to wheel balancing, then I'd graduated to tyre fitting. Finally, in 1976 I started my own business".

Has the industry changed much in the last four decades? "Just a bit, we've moved from cross-ply to radial, for one thing. When I started, you didn't even have inner tubes!"

Laurence may be an old hand in his chosen field but he's relatively new to the First Stop network. Even so, he has no doubts that it will help his business run as smoothly as a well-oiled engine.

As a result, Laurence is in no doubt that First Stop will help him extend a 45-year career way beyond the half-century.

He said: “No, I won’t be stopping at 50! I’d say that there’s at least another 10 years in me yet.”

First Stop’s partner manager Mike Glover said their plan was to keep on developing the network and giving motorists more compelling reasons to visit one of its centres for repairs and maintenance.

Mike calls the First Stop business model a ‘soft franchise’ proposition and, being the retail arm of Bridgestone, he believes that the network is in a strong position to succeed.

“The benefit of working with Bridgestone is that we work directly with the world’s largest tyre manufacturer, before providing some outstanding premium products to motorists.”

For more information about First Stop and its network of centres, visit www.firststop.co.uk