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New Alliance supports self-regulation bid; beauty and hair associations align

As part of a combined effort to establish mandatory self-regulation for the beauty and hairdressing industries, the British Association of Beauty Therapy and Cosmetology (BABTAC) and The Hair and Barber Council (HBC) have aligned to work towards the same goal - to protect consumers, stakeholders and practitioners whilst driving up professional standards.

The beauty industry is one of only a few professional industries currently unregulated in the UK, giving rise to an increasing number of issues including human trafficking, consumer safety concerns and regular scrutiny of professionalism and standards from outside the industry. Meanwhile the Hair Industry has a self-regulatory framework in place but it is voluntary and not mandatory. The new alliance of BABTAC and the HBC allows both organisations to work together, sharing knowledge and combining resources to lobby for affordable, mandatory self-regulation of those working within the hair and beauty industries.

Lesley Blair, Chair at BABTAC said, "We have been campaigning for many years for mandatory self-regulation of the industry, as has the HBC, and by forming this Alliance we can add more weight to the cause. It is in every beauty, hair and barbering professional's best interest to sign up to self-regulation, as it demonstrates that they are qualified and meeting or exceeding industry standards, whilst reducing the number of industry 'rogue traders' who are attracted by the low barriers to entry in the market. Ultimately it will increase client safety and consumer care."

Whilst in hairdressing there is an Act of Parliament that gives the option to be state registered, it is only voluntary and The Hair & Barber Council, who hold the mandate from Government has been lobbying tirelessly to make registering in the UK mandatory.

Keith Conniford, CEO and Registrar of The Hair & Barber Council said, "We are working for and alongside industry professionals to provide them with an affordable form of regulation that improves the reputation of the industry, making it a more desirable and reputable career choice. Working with BABTAC will allow us to continue our work with MPs and increase awareness among the industry, consumers and the Government."

He continues "Our organisational expertise is in hair and the time is now right to form an Alliance that combines our knowledge with that of beauty experts. BABTAC fits the bill in terms of their expertise and their ethos – they too are a not-for-profit organisation seeking to uphold and improve standards, also working tirelessly for the betterment of the industry."

The Alliance will see the two associations combine their weight and influence in a dedicated push for mandatory self-regulation, with many plans in the pipeline for

initiatives including consumer awareness campaigns, industry campaigns and parliamentary representation.

If you are a beauty professional and wish to voluntarily register, please join The Hair & Barber Council at www.haircouncil.org.uk or BABTAC at www.babtac.com.

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Interviews with Lesley Blair and Keith Conniford available on request

For more information, please contact

Victoria Ward

victoria@aptpublicrelations.co.uk

01242 250692

Notes to editors:

The British Association of Beauty Therapy & Cosmetology (BABTAC)

BABTAC is the longest established and most widely recognised membership organisation in the beauty industry, representing highly trained professionals who care about their clients. BABTAC checks the credentials of each and every beauty or holistic therapist before they are given membership of the association, so clients can feel safe when they see the BABTAC logo in the salon. Established in Gloucester in 1977, BABTAC is headed by a Council of industry professionals and offers unrivalled beauty expertise, a rigorous ethical code and a professional practice standard. They work 'not for profit' so their main concerns are the well-being of their Members, regulation of the industry and public welfare.

www.babtac.com

The Hair & Barber Council

The Hair & Barber Council's aim is to raise standards, improve professionalism and the perception of the hair and barber industry to the general public, whilst working towards finally regulating the industry. Established by an Act of Parliament, and currently a voluntary register, the association operates not-for-profit and is firmly rooted in ensuring the on going professional reputation of It seeks their members and the industry as a whole in the future.

www.haircouncil.org.uk