

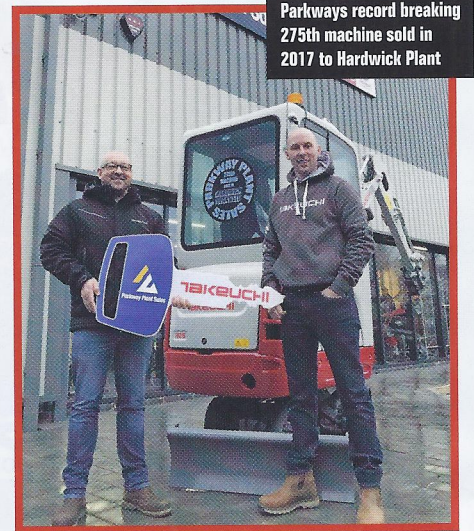
The DEALER wins

Parkway Plant Sales has been rewarded once again with Takeuchi's Dealer of the Year award. **Construction Plant News** profiles a northern powerhouse in the mini excavator market.

2017 would prove to be a big year for Stockport-based Parkway Plant Sales. A new showroom, a landmark 275th machine sold, and a repeat of its 2016 success in winning the Japanese manufacturer's Dealer of the Year accolade are a testament to their success in driving the Takeuchi brand forward across the North West. Managing Director, Philip Oldham and his team are, however, not content to rest there and are looking to build on the genuine innovation they have brought to the industry.

In 2016 Takeuchi celebrated a milestone of its own, by marking 20 years on these shores, and Parkway Plant Sales are one of the compact machinery company's earliest dealers. It was back in 1999 that Philip Oldham would see the benefits of equipment that would go on to win a favourable reputation for reliability, robustness and a decent residual value and took on the Takeuchi franchise.

As far as the end user is concerned the dealers are the face of the company, and the



Parkways record breaking 275th machine sold in 2017 to Hardwick Plant

service they provide is a key determiner of repeat business, which is why Takeuchi is keen to reward those that achieve the highest standards, as National Sales Manager, Chris Bushell explains. "Our Dealer of the Year award is not all about sales. Amongst our nineteen strong nationwide network we will have dealers who will sell more machines, often simply because they have bigger patches, but beyond that we will set a criteria that we ask our dealers to aspire to. That includes efficiently expediting the order for the customer, providing a great service, and an aftersales back up in parts."



“Parkway also scores highly with its marketing activity. The mini-excavator market is very competitive and Philip and his team take a liveried hospitality suite to a number of industry exhibitions where they will showcase Takeuchi to new and existing end users. They will also send a full complement of sales staff to help man the Takeuchi stands at Plantworx and Hillhead and are an invaluable addition to that team.”

In business, image matters and Parkway works hard to make sure that it presents its manufacturers' products professionally. “Everything from our branded clothing and sign written pick ups to the new showroom is designed to reassure the customer right from their initial contact with us that they can expect a good service,” adds Philip Oldham. “Our staff are very knowledgeable and they understand the market in which the purchasers of construction plant are operating. That’s why the award we’ve now collected two years running is not down to just one individual but everyone who works for us from sales and admin staff to the guys in service and parts. It really is a team effort.”

Sales Expansion

The infrastructure around Parkway’s sales operation has also seen significant investment. Its new showroom will be joined by new workshops, whilst the parts business has been streamlined and expanded. A three strong sales force is able to further penetrate the Sheffield and Chesterfield territories, as well as Merseyside, and a pool of 12 mobile engineers ensures machinery stays on the move.

In recent years the mini-excavator market has witnessed some of the most impressive growth amongst machine classes, as even some of the smallest contractors are converted to the benefits of owning rather than hiring, and turning to mechanised muck shifting rather than muscle. Takeuchi’s market share in that sector is growing – presently standing at around 18 – 20 per cent – but Parkway Plant Sales consistently performs at above that level, whilst the company sold 275 machines in 2017, up from just over 180 in 2016, figures which have exceeded expectations.

Colin Bent, Parkway Sales Manager comments: “When we sold our 250th machine to Serv Plant Hire, a TB250, 5 tonne

Philip Oldham MD Parkway Plant Sales with Tamaru Tomonori MD of Takeuchi and the Parkway Plant team



Colin Bent and the 250th Takeuchi sold to SERV Plant Hire



machine, Parkway, Geith and Takeuchi offered a £4,000 donation to a charity of the hirer’s choice, and the Rapid Relief Team would receive the cheque.” Continues Colin: “with all of our plant sales we like to mark it with what we call our ‘Big Key Moment’. The photography is something we can share on social media and it’s a nice way to commemorate what can be a significant investment for a contractor.”

The culture of construction plant sales is changing across the industry, and Parkway is at the vanguard of new ideas. “Our customer base is around 80 per cent contractor and 20 per cent hirer,” explains Sales Representative, Andrew Buckley, “and we pride ourselves on looking after the smaller guys who can be often overlooked by the larger manufacturers. To these guys our service book initiative proves a popular concept.” A commonplace in the automotive sector,

keeping a full service history of a machine in order to maintain a decent resale value is not a phenomenon that exists in plant. That was until Parkway began providing its customers with the means to record the machine’s operational and maintenance history. When the time comes to trade in that machine, if the customer can supply that information it is likely to enhance its resale value, whilst it will also generate genuine parts sales over the excavator’s lifetime.

The Great and Small

Takeuchi’s range is extensive – ranging from 1-15 tonnes, and the largest offset boom model at the maximum end of that weight range has proved to be a particularly successful introduction. At the other end of the spectrum, Takeuchi also reports significant demand for its smallest TB210R reduced tailswing micro amongst owner/operators, with the servo controls cited as a major attraction for that constituency. With the housebuilding sector continuing to expand the 9 tonne TB290 is also seeing increased sales. In fact, Parkway is not the only dealer seeing increased sales with 2017 seeing Takeuchi UK breaking all-time records for sales across all models.

i For further information on Parkway Plant Sales use the reader enquiry number below

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