

# Strong relationships and quality equipment keep BMH loyal to Bell

**Handling and loading heavy and abrasive material, more often than not calls for a wheel loader that exceeds the design capacity dictated by the contract specifications. This is due to many factors, with the most important being ease of operation over sustained long periods of time, day in and day out.**

This is what James Knowles, owner of Bulk Machine Hire, has found when doing material handling on a silica mine. While silica sand that is destined for the glass industry is fine, it's the silica rock in various sizes that has a specific gravity at the higher end and is extremely abrasive. Silica rock is used in the iron and steel making industries.

“We have a contract for amongst other things, material handling at a silica mine, which sees our machines feed the crushers with raw material, blend and load finer material into the processing plant, and load road and rail trucks with the finished product,” says James. “In the past year, we have upgraded our loader fleet to bigger machines due to the tough conditions of abrasive and heavy material and the expectation that downtime is minimised.”

James' choice of loaders fell on Bell L2106E and L2606E Wheel Loaders, which by his own admission is a big step up from the L1806E machines he used before and traded-in on the new and larger models. Having worked for Bell Equipment as a salesman for around eight years,





James recalls the joy that Bell L1706C and L1706C Plus II Wheel Loaders had given his fledgling company when he first embarked on his own. This prompted him to stay with the Bell brand and he hasn't been disappointed.

"We bought the Bell L2606E Wheel Loader about 15 months ago when our clients tasked us with added material handling in the plant, and loading road and rail trucks with the finished product, which for the metal smelting industries is a heavy abrasive chunky rock," James explains. "Due to factors beyond our control, there is the added burden of some double handling in the plant but above all, it's a continuous operation calling for high mechanical availabilities, and downtime due to machine failure is not an option."

According to James, the Bell L2606E Wheel Loader has justified its purchase and with a fuel consumption of 20 litres per hour is proving its worth. Due to the nature of the rough and abrasive material it loads, the bucket has been fitted with ground-engaging tools interspaced with wear-plates that are all swapped out at regular intervals.

"We traded in another Bell L1806E machine on the new Bell L2106E Wheel Loader in October 2016 for much the same reason as the larger machine," James adds. "This machine is used in the plant and blends various grades of silica-rich sand, which is loaded into feed hoppers around the clock and its bucket is fitted with a half arrow edge."

Again, despite heavy and abrasive material and sustained long hours of availability, the Bell L2106E Wheel Loader's frugal fuel burn of 16 litres per hour adds value to its worth.

James makes an important point when he says: "I think what keeps original equipment manufacturing (OEM) companies like Bell Equipment in the forefront of sales is its large and varied product offering. By staying with the brand, we're able to trade a Wheel Loader at favourable rates when wanting to buy a different machine, such as a Bomag Compactor, as an example. Not many other OEMs have a product range large enough that allows you to do that."

"Staying with a brand like Bell Equipment goes further than just machine quality though – it's also about long-term relationships with that very important element in every company, namely people. I can call Bell Equipment at any time and speak to someone I know personally and here I should mention the great relationship we've built with our Sales Representative, Geoff Condon. Dealing with Bell Equipment feels like we're dealing with family," he says.

From humble beginnings since its founding in 2003 when James bought only used Bell B20C Articulated Dump Trucks and used Bell L1706C Wheel Loaders, Bulk Machine Hire's yellow machine fleet now numbers 55 of which no less than 45 carry the Bell Equipment marque.



*Bell Sales Representative, Geoff Condon (left), chats to James Knowles about a used Bell L1806 Wheel Loader that James had bought to use as a general-purpose machine in his yard and workshop.*