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**Begbies Traynor**

## **Huddersfield garden centre rescued saving all 45 jobs**



The business and assets of Whiteleys Garden Centre in Mirfield near Huddersfield have been sold out of administration, securing jobs for 45 staff.

Having traded for over 25 years, the garden centre is well-known locally and sells a wide range of plants, garden furniture, and pets and aquatics supplies as well as having a busy café. Its annual turnover is estimated to be over £2m and assets include its freehold site and significant levels of stock.

The business was placed in the hands of joint administrators, Julian Pitts, Bob Maxwell and Andrew Dick of Begbies Traynor, on 21 November 2012, and the administrators continued to trade the garden centre, without making any redundancies, while a buyer was sought.

Whiteleys Garden Centre has been bought by a private investment vehicle chaired and managed by lawyer and turnaround adviser Chris Jones. The purchase was funded by Reward Capital, led by partner Dave Jones; who was advised by Marie Pugh and Maxine Burton of Leeds law firm Clarion.

“This is a well-established and viable business with a loyal customer base which suffered from financial pressures that were not related to its day-to-day operations,” explains joint administrator Julian Pitts. “As we were confident that a buyer could quickly be found, we continued to trade the business, preserving the jobs of all staff.



media relations and profile

“The garden centre generated a high level of interest from potential buyers and it is great news for the business, staff and customers that a deal has been completed so quickly with the minimum of disruption. The deal is the best possible outcome, securing a future for one of the area’s most popular garden centres, without having made any redundancies.”

Chris Jones, director at drydensfairfax solicitors which advised the purchaser, said: “The garden centre has a strong reputation locally and great potential. It represents an excellent investment opportunity and, in the hands of a new owner, it has a bright future ahead.”

Dave Jones, partner at Reward Capital, added: “Once again, we have been able to look at the bigger picture and provide funding for a basically sound business which has been faced with short-term problems. It’s extremely satisfying to have helped to preserve the business and much-needed jobs.”

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**Photo shows:** Whiteleys Garden Centre in Mirfield

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