

Begbies Traynor

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Jobs Saved as Yorkshire-Based Value Clothing Company Rescued

Leeds-based 2nd Thoughts Limited, which trades as the Ellie Louise and Happit chain of value clothing stores in England and Scotland, has been bought out of administration, saving more than 240 jobs.

The business and assets of the company have been acquired for an undisclosed sum by Ellie Louise Trading Limited.

The deal was negotiated by Bob Maxwell and Edward Klempka of leading business rescue, recovery, and restructuring specialist, Begbies Traynor, who were appointed Joint Administrators to 2nd Thoughts Limited last week (5th January). Leeds-based solicitors Carrick Read Insolvency acted for the purchasers.

Selling mostly budget ladies wear, the company had its headquarters and a warehouse in Garforth near Leeds and was founded by Mick Broughton. The family business began life as a stall on Seacroft market and was subsequently run by sons, Gary and Kevin.

In June 2008, 2nd Thoughts Ltd acquired the Dunfermline-based fashion chain Happit, consisting of 40 shops in Scotland. The group had grown into 82 stores nationwide, including 12 in Yorkshire, and had a turnover of £14 million a year.

Bob Maxwell of Begbies Traynor, said: “This is the best possible outcome in the circumstances – achieving a prompt sale of the business as a going concern will enable the remaining 49 stores to continue trading, safeguarding the existing jobs.

“This long-established firm has been another victim of the downturn in the retail sector, but the business built up over the last thirty years will remain in the hands of the family, giving it the best chance of recovery.”

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