Why does a Cloth need an Authority? Why does an Orb need Guardians? Just what is it that makes HARRIS TWEED so special that it needs protection?

HARRIS TWEED is made from 100% pure new wool, which is dyed, blended, carded, spun, warped, woven, finished and finally authenticated as HARRIS TWEED all in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. It is because of its unique qualities and provenance that it is the only fabric in the world to have its own Act of Parliament. It is also the only one to have a management board whose goal is to protect and promote HARRIS TWEED all over the world.

The Harris Tweed Authority’s role is to guard the integrity of the brand – aiming to sustain the jobs of today and protect the industry for generations to come. It achieves this by telling the story of our unique Hebridean industry – its people, place and provenance – and by seeking out any market abuses, ensuring that products that are not HARRIS TWEED are not promoted or associated with the brand.

Norman L Macdonald (Chairman of the HTA Board):
“The passing of the 1993 Harris Tweed Act of Parliament formally recognised the importance of HARRIS TWEED to these islands and created, in the Harris Tweed Authority, a statutory body charged with looking after it. Prior to the HT Authority, the HT Association served the industry for 84 years.”

Now you can learn for yourself about the history of the iconic Orb certification mark in the Sgeulachd a’ Chlò Mhòir (The Story of Harris Tweed) exhibition at the very offices of the Harris Tweed Authority based in the Stornoway Town Hall.

Lorna Macaulay (HTA’s Chief Executive):
“Today, it has never been more important that we protect the place of HARRIS TWEED in this world of throwaway fashion. It is a cloth that speaks of our Hebridean colour, culture and community. Through Sgeulachd a’ Chlò Mhòir, it is wonderful to share this story.”

Norman L Macdonald

Now you can learn for yourself about the history of the iconic Orb certification mark in the Sgeulachd a’ Chlò Mhòir (The Story of Harris Tweed) exhibition at the very offices of the Harris Tweed Authority based in the Stornoway Town Hall.

Lorna Macaulay (HTA’s Chief Executive):
“We have long felt there was a need for a HARRIS TWEED ‘touch point’ here in the town of Stornoway. We embraced the opportunity to develop what has become the Sgeulachd a’ Chlò Mhòir (The Story of Harris Tweed). For many local visitors, the content of the room, the stories, the sights and sounds connected to the ‘Big Cloth’ have stirred up very happy memories of the industry in which their parents and grandparents worked.”

A whistle-stop tour, with a personal audio set in several languages, the exhibition covers over a hundred years of the hallowed cloth and explores the role and remit of the Harris Tweed Authority itself, the protection of the industry, the manufacturing and weaving process, history, fashion and culture.

Over the summer months, experienced weavers take to the double and single width looms sited in the room to demonstrate weaving. Stornoway Town Hall fills with the unmistakeable rhythmic clatter of island industry!

As HARRIS TWEED is made in the very homes of the islanders of the Outer Hebrides, it is entirely fitting that the Harris Tweed Authority also open its doors to show island hospitality and welcome in locals and visitors alike to hear its stories. We encourage you to visit and learn more about the fascinating story of the HARRIS TWEED industry.

And bring your questions. We welcome them!
HARRIS TWEED is more than a unique handwoven textile. It is also the story of a real place with a rich history and culture, beautiful landscape and vibrant communities located in Scotland’s remote and fascinating Outer Hebrides islands.

Situated in the heart of Stornoway, at the home of the Harris Tweed Authority, Sgeulachd Chlò Mhòir/The Story of Harris Tweed will introduce you to the history and development of the HARRIS TWEED industry. Discover the processes from wool to yarn; watch weavers work the looms; marvel at the pattern, colour and range of this most fine cloth.

• Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm
• Live weavers’ demonstrations (check times)
• Audio tour available
• Private groups by arrangement
• £2 entry/£3 with demonstration

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