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Mr Angus Macleod  
Park House  
Marybank  
Isle of Lewis

Dear Mr Macleod

I am currently studying for my Honours year at Glasgow Caledonian University, and as part of my final year I am undertaking a dissertation regarding the Harris Tweed Industry and the new developments that are taking place. Having been born and brought up on the island myself, I have a keen interest in the regeneration of such a vital industry to the Western Isles.

My third year thesis was more of a historical analysis of the industry, for which I attended one of your lectures in Leurbost and found it most interesting as well as very useful to my study, as in contrast to other research, you gave another angle to answering the question - "Is double width the answer?"

I am now investigating Harris Tweed's response to market demands and must first analyse the product life cycle to determine specific reasons for the decline. I am writing to you in the hope that you may be able to provide any relevant information here or reference to reports. For example, I believe that Purchase Tax on Harris Tweed was doubled by the Labour government in the 1950s causing smaller producers to leave the industry. Do you have any documentation/reference to reports regarding this or any other specific reasons contributing to the decline?

I also propose to examine if the introduction of double width Harris Tweed as a regenerative initiative was the only option, and how, if it was, the relevant bodies came to this conclusion. Do you see such an introduction as a threat to Harris Tweed's position as a unique luxury cloth? For example, the danger of overproduction, forcing Harris Tweed to compete with more inferior tweeds?

In determining Harris Tweed's position in the market place, I intend to carry out a comparative analysis of Harris Tweed and Donegal Tweed, comparing both product life cycles, marketing strategies etc., and then to compare these two to the overall trend of the British Wool industry over the past 50 years.

I would be most grateful for any information or references you can provide me with to aid my research and would also be very grateful if you could spare the time for an interview on my return home to Stornoway for the Christmas break, at your own convenience.

Thanks for your help

Yours Sincerely

Helen MacLennan