LOVE YOUR CLOTHES BLOG POST

Making clothes last longer: the first SCAP Extending the Life of Clothes Design Award

Love Your Clothes is all about making clothes last longer, so we were intrigued to see what designers might come up with for the SCAP Extending the Life of Clothes Design Award.

WRAP, our parent organisation, set up the awards as part of its Sustainable Clothing Action Plan (SCAP). It was aiming to find clothes designed to last longer but clothes that people would actually want to wear – they had to be fashionable and saleable as well as innovative.

Four talented fashion designers made the shortlist and the winner was announced last week. There were some really original ideas: made-to-measure clothes for city professional women – showing sustainability can be sophisticated; a dual-purpose dress that becomes a bag; and children's clothes with dissolvable seams so they can be made bigger as the child grows.

Winner Rhiannon Hunt came up with garments that you can adjust to change the size, fit, style or length. The basic elements are sewn together in the normal way, but some sections – including box pleats, panels, waistbands and hemlines – have detachable fastenings instead so you can customise them as much as you need.

The fastenings are completely reusable, and can even be swapped between garments: Rhiannon suggested you could have them made from precious metals and hand them down. And the fabrics are designed to become more beautiful with age, giving you another incentive to keep wearing them for longer.

In her entry, Rhiannon said: "Sustainability always plays a significant role in my work as a designer so it seemed like the perfect opportunity to take on a new challenge, tackling textile waste and the notion of 'fast fashion'.

"Changing people's perception of sustainable fashion is one of the key challenges to seeing it become the norm. Many people have preconceived ideas about the look, feel and cost of sustainable clothing, but with technological advancements in materials science, the possibilities really are endless."

Read more about the shortlisted entries.