

Coffin requirements

The following information is provided for guidance if you are arranging a funeral yourself without the assistance of a funeral director.

The coffin is one of the most symbolic items of the funeral proceeding and there are many options to choose from, every family will have different opinions regarding what coffin they use and factors such as cost, environmental issues and appearance will have an impact on this.

Listed below are some of the most popular types of coffin we receive at Wealden Crematorium, each one will vary in cost, environmental impact and appearance. The list is not extensive but will give you some guidance as to what is available.

Traditional Wooden Coffins

These coffins have been used for years and are usually made of oak, elm or pine. Due to the use of solid wood the cost of these tends to be high and there are now more environmentally-friendly options to consider.

Veneered Coffins

This type of coffin is the most commonly received at Wealden Crematorium. The coffin is constructed of chipboard and a veneer is applied to give the appearance of a traditional wooden coffin. These are a cheaper option but as formaldehyde is used in the making of the chipboard they are less environmentally-friendly as they release pollutants.

Cardboard Coffins

Cardboard coffins are increasing in popularity. They can be made from recycled materials and are affordable. They can be easily personalized and offer lower pollution rates when used for cremation. They must have a minimum 3.3mm integral solid board base.

Bamboo Coffins

Bamboo grows faster than any other plant on the planet, so coffins woven from bamboo are more sustainable. They are casket shaped but due to the construction they are more expensive than cardboard coffins. These could be a good choice if you are considering a natural coffin with a graceful appearance.

Willow Coffins

Willow is an environmentally renewable resource. The coffins are casket shaped and handcrafted using traditional methods which gives the coffins strength whilst remaining light. A good choice if you want a natural coffin and environmental impact is important to you.

Constructing your own coffin

You can construct your own coffin, but these must be suitable and safe for cremation.

We would advise you to contact us regarding this and to arrange for an inspection of the coffin to take place before the funeral to make sure it is acceptable for cremation.

The coffin must not exceed a width of 30 inches (76cm), a length of 78 inches (198cm) or height of 22 inches (56cm) and must have a fixed solid base with no snags to allow unobstructed passage over rollers or ball bearing tables. If a non-integral base is used this must be fixed to the coffin in a manner that will ensure that it cannot become detached.

Both ends of the coffin should be of a robust construction sufficient to withstand the pressure of a charging machine.

Ferrous (containing or consisting of iron) screws and staples can be used in the construction of the coffin but no other metal, PVC, sealant or plastic or should be used.

Gloss, wax, varnish or extensive paint finishes must not be used, a thin layer of water-based lacquer or paint can be used.

Absorbent cloth or cotton wadding must be used in the coffin as fluid may leak from the body.

The coffin must clearly display the full name of the deceased and their age, either on a plate or card fixed to the coffin or painted or written on the lid or sides.

Where to Purchase Coffins.

We do not stock or sell coffins at the crematorium. Local funeral directors will generally supply coffins to you directly or you can contact and purchase coffins directly from suppliers. If you state that you require a coffin for cremation they will ensure the one supplied is suitable.

The list below is not exhaustive but is designed to offer suggestions if you would like to explore biodegradable and “eco” coffins:

ECoffins

Garland House
Rawling Street
Milstead
Sittingbourne
Kent ME9 0RT
01795 830688
Website: www.ecoffins.co.uk



Natural Endings (suppliers of eco-friendly coffins)

151 Northenden Road
Sale, Manchester M33 2HS
Telephone: 0161 969 6690
Website: www.naturalendings.co.uk/eco-coffins/

Parley Green (suppliers of cardboard coffins)

1 Nimrod Way
Ferndown Industrial Estate
Dorset BH21 7SH
Telephone: 01202 051371
Website: www.parleygreen.co.uk/

Sussex Willow Coffins (supplier of eco-friendly wicker willow coffins nationwide)

Brighton, Hove and Steyning
West Sussex BN44 3RH
Telephone: 01273 671430
Website: www.sussexwillowcoffins.co.uk