

Coffin Club Colchester Registered Charity 1182860 – Annual Report 2023/24

Coffin Clubs help people to reclaim a participatory relationship with death and build strong, supportive communities where people can have frank conversations and reflect on their future with camaraderie. We empower people and help them understand their choices and options for low-cost funeral planning.

Coffin Club UK is based on a model that has successfully run in New Zealand for a number of years. It is for elderly people, people who are terminally ill, or their carer's, and for anyone interested to come and work out their funeral wish-list, plan and cost their funeral and if they wish, assemble and personalise their own coffin!

Coffin Club Colchester Registered Charity 1182860 is affiliated with, although financially separate from, Coffin Club UK through which it receives support and advice and whose Patron is the actress, Miriam Margolyes. It seeks to gain its own independent financial support in order to run a club in Colchester thus widening the impact.

We are the first Coffin Club in Essex!

Coffin Club Colchester aims to run its free 6-week courses in Spring (culminating in 'Dying Matters Awareness Week') and Autumn (culminating in Mexican Day or the Dead) each year mirroring its successful Autumn 2019 course when we had 13 participants, two of whom decorated their own coffins! The attendees enjoy talks, Q & A and discussion about elements of their 'Funeral Wish List' each week:

Week 1 – *'There's more than one choice for your final farewell'* course overview - Celebrant

Week 2 – Ambassador from the Local Hospice

Week 3 – Manager of the Local Crematorium/End of Life Doula/Soul Midwife/Owner of a Green Burial Site and/or Green Crematorium (Resomation/Water Cremation/Aquamation)

Week 4 – Local Independent family run Funeral Director

Week 5 – Organ & Body Donation

Week 6 – Lawyer specialising in End-of-life administrative planning including Wills, Probate, Advance Directives, Enduring Power of Attorney etc

Coffin Club Colchester has its own website www.coffinclubcolchester.co.uk, and a social media presence across the platforms of Facebook and X (formally Twitter). Coffin Club Colchester can supply low carbon footprint, eco- friendly, flat-packed coffins, which we import from the Netherlands company 'Coffin in a Box' which conform to all EU Standards and have been well received.

During this annual reporting year, Coffin Club Colchester received several donations totalling £165 including one from the 3 T's group, for whom we gave a talk, kind donations from a Dr C C K**n and a Su-C***g H***h, Colchester Pride attendees as well as our own family members and we are very grateful to Matthew Edwards for his continuing support in

providing the refreshments for our courses and Wendy Johnson for all her help over the years.

Our Spring course 2023 did not go ahead as there were not enough 'clubbers' booked to make it viable.

Coffin Club Colchester were invited to present in person to the North East Essex Health & Wellbeing – End of Life Board at St Helena Hospice.

We had a stand at Colchester Pride 2023 held at Firstsite in Colchester and were very well received.

Our Autumn course 2023 did go ahead with 5 clubbers in our new venue of Community360, Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester.

As part of Compassionate Communities we were asked to do a joint presentation with the local independent, family-run funeral directors who speak on our Coffin Club Colchester courses entitled 'Demystifying Funerals' to healthcare professionals, community workers etc and the feedback was very complimentary, several attendees commented that they had learnt a lot!

Coffin Club Colchester offers free (non-financial) support to individuals and families at risk of funeral poverty* by supporting people in their applications for government monies and/or helping them to crowdfund or apply for grants from charitable bodies to alleviate their financial burden and where appropriate take councils to task over their statutory duties for public health funerals.

Coffin Club Colchester is an active member of both Compassionate Communities Tendring, Tendring Older Persons Forum and Compassionate Cities and have utilised services and networking opportunities through Community Voluntary Services Tendring and Community 360. Jenny Edwards, Beth Hatwell and Josh Price (the current Trustees of Coffin Club Colchester) are all happy to stand again at the AGM scheduled for 28th May 2024.

Coffin Club Colchester looks forward to continuing to open up the once taboo subject of death and dying, giving a voice to the merits of having those conversations with your loved ones and encouraging healthy debate about various elements of our comprehensive 'Funeral Wish List'.

*funeral poverty is where the price of a funeral is beyond a person's ability to pay

Accounts for Coffin Club Colchester Registered Charity: 1182860 from 6th April 2023 – 5th April 2024

Opening Balance £2731

Receipts and Payments

Receipts

Unrestricted funds to	Total funds to
The nearest £	the nearest £

'Start Up' fund pledged by Trustees	£ 0	£ 0
Donations	£ 165	£ 165
Grants	£ 0	£ 0
Coffins	£ 0	£ 0
Gift Aid	£ 51	£ 51
Other income	£ 61	£ 61

Total to 5th April 2024 **£ 277**

Payments

Charity PLI	£ 101	£ 101
Affiliations	£ 10	£ 10
Speakers Expenses	£ 180	£ 180
Advertising (incl. website/Stand)	£ 177	£ 177
Coffins	£ 0	£ 0
Training (incl. room hire)	£ 170	£ 170
Sundries	£ 305	£ 305
Start Up Funds pledged by Trustees	£ 200	£ 200

Total to 5th April 2024 **£1143**

Opening Balance	£2731
Total Receipts	£ 277
Less payments	£1143
Remaining	£1865