

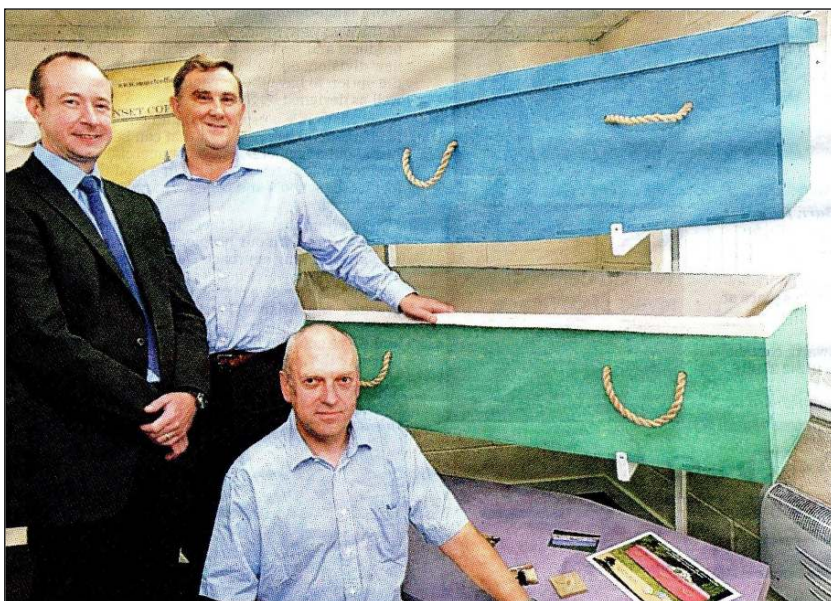
Eco worries laid to rest



TREE SAVER: Alan Arkwell, production manager at Sundeala, with the pile of newspapers which saves a tree and will produce the board for two and a half coffins, above. Right, Steve Ancrum, MD Sunset Coffins, with a coffin designed to carry up to 57 stone.

BW by business editor **Bev Hawes**

Three county companies have teamed up to launch the first coffins created from board made entirely from recycled newspapers. They believe the eco-friendly caskets will appeal to those who care about the environment. Sunset Coffins is a collaboration between three companies based in Cam, near Dursley. Funeral director Jeremy Clutterbuck had been searching for a truly eco-friendly coffin for several years. But those on the market were either made of wicker, known in the trade to "creak, squeak and leak" and often imported from China or flimsy cardboard versions which have been known to collapse. But he found that Sundeala paper mill just a mile away was making a very strong board from recycled newspapers in a variety of colours with a velvety finish.



TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: Steve Ancrum, kneeling, Jeremy Clutterbuck, left, funeral director and Martin Allen, sales manager with Sundeala, which supplies the board.

He took his idea to The Frazer Company which is run by engineer Steve Ancrum at Draycott Business Park, Cam and has a reputation for making bespoke items in plastic and timber.

After two years of collaboration, design and trials (including several cremations) Sunset Coffins was created within The Frazer Company.

The eco-friendly coffins are lined with natural jute which is also used for the handles.

The coffins can carry up to 30 stones in weight with a special super-size version capable of holding up to 53 stones.

It takes 70 tabloid newspapers to make one coffin.

Jeremy Clutterbuck, whose family has been funeral directors for six generations, said: "I am passionate about minimising our effect on the environment and everything I do I try to do in an environmentally friendly way.

"This coffin is very substantial and sturdy.

"I am overjoyed with the work Steve Ancrum and his team have done in developing my ideas.

"What they have managed to bring to market is a truly professional product which has taken vision and determination."

Sunset Coffins has entered the University of Gloucestershire-sponsored innovation category of The Citizen and Gloucestershire Echo 2010 Business Awards.

Steve Ancrum said: "Sunset Coffins started from the first principle for a new product – that there is a demand, and an increasing one, for 100 per cent eco-friendly coffins.

"This is a great example of true collaboration between three local small businesses and how it can work to the benefit of them all.

"It is good for the local economy, particularly during the recession when so many small businesses have been forced to lay off staff.

"Sunset Coffins has enabled The Frazer Company not only to keep its team but is set to expand it."

Sundeala which makes the board from recycled newspaper is better known for producing notice and white boards for offices and schools.

Sales director Martin Allen said: "We are always looking for alternative markets and this is a superb product.

"We think it is a brilliant idea. It is the ideal solution for the final package you will ever need."