



EDLESBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

15 Summerleys, Edlesborough, Bedfordshire, LU6 2HR

20th August 2026

Dear Judith, Anna and Karen

Re: Memorandum of Understanding and Future Involvement with the Church on the Hill, Edlesborough

The Council and the volunteers of the Friends of the Church on the Hill, Edlesborough (FOTCOTHE), have carefully considered the Memorandum of Understanding provided by the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT). Following detailed discussion, the following response has been agreed.

At present, the Council and volunteers within FOTCOTHE do not support any of the proposed Friends Group arrangements set out by the CCT. The options presented do not reflect the structure or operating model of our group and are therefore unsuitable. Consequently, the Council will not be signing the Memorandum of Understanding.

In view of this position, the Council and the FOTCOTHE have no alternative but to end its formal involvement with the CCT. As a result, with immediate effect, our volunteers will cease undertaking the following activities on behalf of the Church:

- Cleaning the church;
- Opening and securing the church;
- Emptying the wall safe;
- Responding to external enquiries or requests to assist contractors.

Please confirm as a matter of urgency where the church keys should be returned.

Both the Council and the volunteers are extremely disappointed that matters have reached this point. Over many years, the volunteers have contributed significant time, effort, and resources to the Church on the Hill, including the successful delivery of the new church window project, floodlighting the Church, improving visitor experience and engaging in Heritage Open Day events.

Regrettably, the Council and volunteers are now unable to progress several repairs and maintenance issues that have been identified and communicated to the CCT, including:

- Switch over of internal lighting to LED;
- Failed internal lighting;
- External floodlights;
- The porch light replacement.

Responsibility for these matters will now rest solely with the CCT.

The Council understands that the CCT implemented changes to its governance arrangements in January 2026. Neither the Council nor the volunteers were informed of these changes until February 2026. The lack of timely communication resulted in

considerable additional work and created a number of difficulties in the organisation and delivery of the annual EdleFest event, which is organised and run entirely by volunteers.

As a direct consequence of these issues, EdleFest recorded a loss of **£1,188.71** for the first time in its history. Previously, funds raised through the event had always been retained within a Council earmarked reserve for the sole purpose of supporting future EdleFest events and funding repairs and improvements to the Church on the Hill. On the basis of attendance numbers, this suggests a predicted loss of around 380 visitors.

We also note that the volunteers have confirmed that the church donation machine does not function correctly for any length of time.

The Friends Group feels strongly about the circumstances that have led to this outcome and has advised that it will be writing separately to the Chief Executive of the CCT to express its concerns.

Yours sincerely,

P E Pataky

Miss Penny Pataky
Clerk to Edlesborough Parish Council