



GNOSALL  
PARISH COUNCIL

[GNOSALLPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK](http://GNOSALLPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK)



# 2025 **ANNUAL** **REPORT**

A year of progress, challenges, and community spirit, celebrating our achievements, welcoming new faces, and shaping the future of Gnosall Parish together.

# CHAIR'S REPORT



**COUNCILLOR GAIL GREGORY**  
CHAIR, GNOSALL PARISH COUNCIL

And here we are again – another Parish Year has turned and our Annual Assembly is upon us. Except that it hasn't really been a very typical year in many ways – but then, are they ever? One thing that can be guaranteed about being a parish councillor is that it is never boring – there's a blend of routine administrative tasks and exciting challenges that arise or that we set ourselves.

I did not begin this year as Chair but as Vice Chair to Allan Mills, who was

unfortunately unable to complete his term of office. Thank you, Allan, for all you have done and all the skills you brought to our council. As Vice Chair, there is no automatic assumption of the role should this occur but I was elected Chair by my fellow councillors in January and I thank them for placing their trust in me once more. In May, our parish year starts anew.

Parishioners will already know that we have had a challenging start to 2025 as the resignation of our longstanding and much-respected Chief Officer and the concurrent departure of several councillors left us with much work to do. They will all be very much missed and more information is to be found later in this Report. This has necessitated a reordering of priorities and objectives for the year.

However, we have already achieved our first, and primary, objective, by appointing both a new Chief Officer and 6 new councillors – which is little short of miraculous! I am genuinely thrilled at the wealth of talent, skill, experience and enthusiasm which we have brought into the team. It is

always difficult when longstanding members leave; their experience is not easily matched. But I am delighted to say that we have found a new team of people who have much to offer. It is now our job to get them all settled and to discover and develop their talents so that they benefit the parish and also bring satisfaction to them in their new roles. There really is nothing like being a parish councillor – it brings so much satisfaction to know that you have made a difference to your community and I thank all our councillors who have given their time and energy to do just this.

I thank our Community Support Officer, my fellow councillors, my Vice Chair Chris Haycock (who has produced this excellent Report) and, of course, Jayne Cooper, our outgoing Chief Officer, for all that they have done to keep Council moving forward. Leadership is very much a team effort and I have been privileged to work with an outstanding team. Change is always threatening but I am certain that Gnosall Parish Council has a talented and enthusiastic team to lead it into the next phase of its development.

## GNOSALL PARISH COUNCIL

Established in 1895, Gnosall Parish Council (GPC) is the first tier of government for the Gnosall, Moreton and Knightley wards.

Unlike principal authorities such as Stafford Borough Council and Staffordshire Council, GPC does not have statutory duties to discharge, but does have a wide range of discretionary statutory powers it may choose to use to provide services and amenities for our residents.

Our Mission Statement is “to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the Parish of Gnosall and those that visit it.”

There are a total of sixteen parish councillors, twelve representing Gnosall ward, three representing Moreton, Outwoods and Bromstead and one representing Knightley.

Each councillor is unpaid, and elected for a term of four years. Anyone over the age of 18 who is a citizen of the UK, EU or Commonwealth can become a



parish councillor if they are an elector in; or work/live in the local area. The main role of a councillor is to participate in the collective decision making process of Gnosall Parish Council. No councillor has the authority to make decisions about council business on their own.

Councillors may also sit on a variety of committees responsible for overseeing the services the council provide, as well as sitting on Working Groups with residents to look at issues facing the village.

### AT A GLANCE



**POPULATION**  
**5,100**



**HOUSEHOLDS**  
**2,300**



**MEDIAN AGE**  
**45.4**



**AREA**  
**37.8 km<sup>2</sup>**



**PRECEPT 2025/26**  
**£122,631.90**

## A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

As we reflect on the past year, we must take a moment to honour and thank **Jayne Cooper**, our outgoing Chief Officer, who has dedicated the last 17 years to serving Gnosall Parish Council and its parishioners with unwavering commitment, professionalism, and heart.

Jayne has not just been a **Clerk of the Year** award winner, she has been the driving force behind so many of our achievements. Under her leadership, Gnosall Parish Council achieved **NALC Gold Status** twice, a truly incredible testament to Jayne's expertise and dedication.

But beyond the many accolades and awards, Jayne has been the backbone of our parish - guiding,

supporting, and often going above and beyond to make sure everything runs smoothly.

Jayne is not just respected in a professional context but **deeply cherished** as a person by all who have worked with her during her tenure at the Parish Council.

While we are fortunate to have a highly experienced new Chief Officer stepping in, there's no doubt that **Jayne will be truly missed** - and that's an understatement. On behalf of the Parish Council and the whole community, we thank you Jayne, for everything you have done.

We wish you all the best in whatever comes next.



**JAYNE COOPER**  
CHIEF OFFICER

## FAREWELL, COUNCILLORS

This past year, we have said farewell to several dedicated councillors who have stepped down from their roles. Each of them has given their **time, energy, and commitment** to making Gnosall Parish a better place to live, work, and visit. Their contributions—whether in planning decisions, community projects, environmental improvements, or planning events - have helped shape our parish in countless ways.

Being a parish councillor is a **voluntary role**, and we know how much effort goes into attending meetings, engaging with residents, and pushing forward initiatives that

benefit the whole community. To all of the following councillors who have served and recently stepped down: we extend our deepest thanks for your dedication and hard work.

- ◆ **Allan Mills**
- ◆ **Doug Webb**
- ◆ **Graham Payne**
- ◆ **Kenneth Ingram**
- ◆ **Michelle Nicholls**
- ◆ **Tracey Simkin**

We hope to continue seeing you involved in the community in different ways, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

## A WARM HELLO



**JENNIFER MARSHALL**  
OUR NEW CHIEF OFFICER

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Chief Officer, **Jennifer Marshall**, who joins us from Newport Town Council. Jennifer has a wealth of experience in senior administrative roles within local council, which will be **hugely beneficial** to the whole community.

The role of Chief Officer is an important one, and Jennifer will be responsible for **managing Gnosall Parish Council's activities**, providing support and advice, and ensuring that the council operates legally and efficiently.

We all look forward to working with Jennifer and wish her the very best in her new role.

### NEW PARISH COUNCILLORS

We are delighted to welcome six new councillors to Gnosall Parish Council. Stepping into public service is a significant commitment, and we are grateful to have such **enthusiastic individuals** joining us to represent the interests of our community.

Their fresh perspectives, ideas, and dedication will be invaluable as we continue to work on **key issues** that affect us all.

### Our new Councillors are:

- ◆ Bob Middleton
- ◆ Keith Parry
- ◆ Chris Herbert
- ◆ Gren Knight
- ◆ Aaron Reeves
- ◆ Wayne Titley

# 2024-2025 **SNAPSHOT**

## GG'S RE-OPENS

GG's Youth Club refurbishment was completed and a new leader, Meg Shaw was appointed.

## GNOSALL CFEST

The hugely popular Gnosall Canal Festival (CFEST) attended by a record number of boats and visitors.

## NEW CSO

Gnosall Parish Council welcomes its new Community Support Officer, Michelle Farmer.

## XMAS LIGHTS

Christmas lights switched on at The Grosvenor Centre, High Street, and Christmas trees across the parish.

## CHRISTMAS MEALS

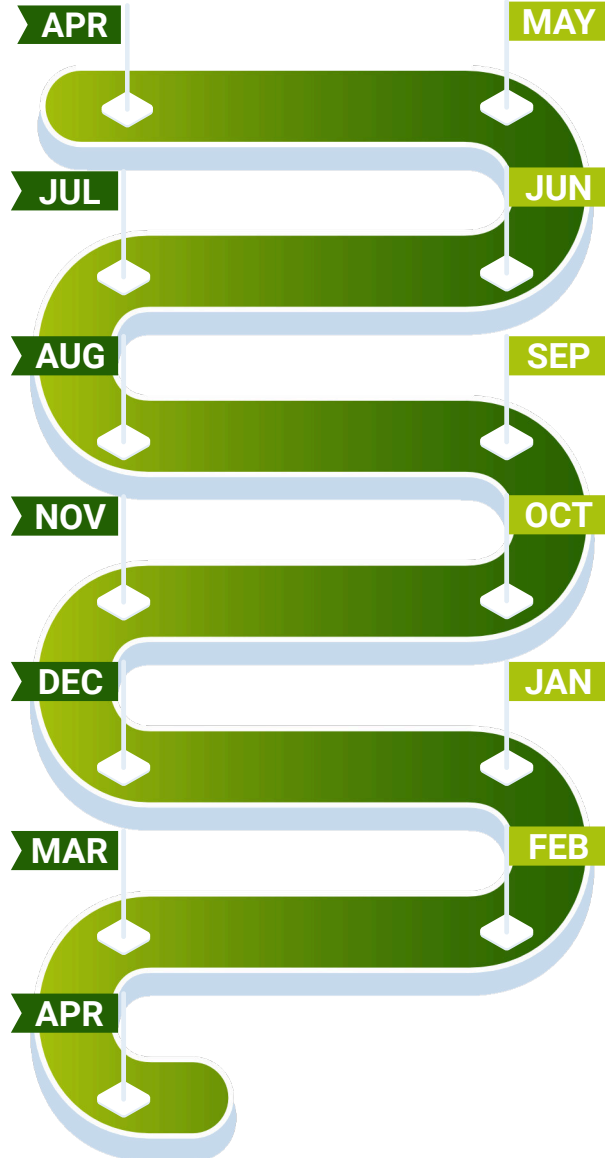
Christmas meals delivered to homes across the parish, thanks to the hard work of Rachel Goodhall and volunteers.

## WARM WELCOME

Gnosall Parish Council welcomes a new Chief Officer, as well as co-opting six new councillors.

## WEBSITE LAUNCH

Gnosall Parish Council announces a new website:  
[www.gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk)



## ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Gnosall Parish Annual Assembly, with informative presentations from local groups and organisations.

## PUBLIC MEETING

A well attended and lively public meeting to discuss solar farms and housing developments.

## VISIT BY MAYOR

The Mayor of Stafford visited GG's Youth Club to meet the children, staff and volunteers.

## DONATIONS

Gnosall Globetrotters gives generous donation to Gnosall Christmas Meal Fund, youth club & Best Kept Village (BKV).

## A SAD FAREWELL

Gnosall Parish Council Chief Officer Jayne Cooper announces that she will be stepping down from her role.

## S56 NOTICE

Councillors were assigned the task of drafting S56 Notices to compel the County Council to take action on road defects.



## 2024-2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

### April 2024 (Start of council year)

- The online booking system for The Grosvenor Centre was reviewed and improved.
- Residents attended the council meeting and raised their concerns about flooding in Outwoods – a matter that remains unresolved despite continual support from the parish council.
- The agreement between Gnosall Parish Council (GPC) and Gnosall Library Environment & Nurture (GLEAN) was discussed and reviewed many times throughout the month.
- The Council was asked by Gnosall Heritage Group to help in finding storage space for artefacts.

### May 2024

- Approx. 60 residents from Moreton attended the council meeting to raise their concerns about a possible solar farm in Moreton as well as flooding in Outwoods.
- Issues regarding the laying of new fibre cables across the village were raised with the parish council.
- An internal audit was completed, as well as the end of year finance work.
- The Annual Assembly was held with an informative presentations from some local groups. However, public attendance was disappointing.
- The Council's insurance was renewed on 30th May. The premium had doubled as a result of the youth club

insurance claim, and it was difficult to find another insurer to match or beat the current insurers quote or offer insurance.

- A public open day was held to promote the Grosvenor Centre.
- The agreement between GLEAN and GPC was agreed.
- A new committee structure was agreed, amalgamating 9 committees into 5.
- The staffing structure was thoroughly reviewed following research with other parish councils. The Clerk's job title changed to Chief Officer.

# 2024-2025 SNAPSHOT

## June 2024

- A very well attended and lively public meeting was held on 4th June to discuss possible development.
- Residents from Moreton again shared their concerns with the council about proposed solar farms.
- Receptionist/Administrator and Finance Assistant jobs were advertised.
- The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Working Group continued to meet.
- GG's Youth Club reopened on 6th June by the Mayor of Stafford.
- Damage to The Boardwalk on The Acres was repaired.
- Residents in Outwoods were met by parish council representatives regarding ongoing flooding issues.

## July 2024

- Another successful Gnosall Canal Festival (CFest), organised and managed by the Gnosall Towpath Restoration Group. This event is growing in popularity every year, and brings so much enjoyment to local people and many others who visit.
- GFest 2025 Dates were set. However, the 2025 event was cancelled because of a loss of councillors and a new member of staff joined, which meant that the new council needs to get established and gain more experience.
- A new Community Support Officer (CSO) was appointed, but the position of Finance Assistant remains vacant.
- GPC bid at auction of Severn Trent Water land by the allotment was unsuccessful. The council was outbid by an unknown buyer.
- A Parish Councillor resigned.
- A successful funding application for GG's youth club was received.

## August 2024

- A new Community Support Officer (CSO) commenced employment.
- Resurfacing work on the allotment internal roadways was completed.

- ROSPA carried out its inspection of the recreation areas.

## September 2024

- A Finance Officer was identified but withdrew as her circumstances changed. A Deputy Caretaker/Cleaner was appointed.
- Plans for the Christmas Lights Switch On were agreed.
- The Mayor of Stafford visited GG's youth club to meet the children, staff and volunteers.
- Council agreed to set up a Pre Project Board with Wrekin Housing Group to discuss development of land off Knightley Road.
- The council's response to the National Policy and Framework Consultation was submitted by 24th September.

## October 2024

- Financial Regulations had a thorough overhaul.
- GPC received donations from Gnosall Globetrotters for the Christmas Meal fund, GG's Youth Club, and Best Kept Village (BKV) group.
- A successful funding application resulted in a grant being received for the review of the Gnosall Neighbourhood Plan.

## November 2024

- A detailed list of Christmas events happening across the parish throughout the festive season was compiled and distributed.
- The Christmas lights event was successful, with all tickets snapped up within hours of being available.
- A five-year management plan for The Acres was considered.
- Remembrance Sunday service was attended by several councillors.
- New staffing arrangements were agreed.

## December 2024

- Budget preparation was completed.

- The first of six pre-project board meetings with Wrekin Housing Group.
- The council assisted in the arrangement and delivery of free Community Christmas meals.

Councillors helped with the delivery of the Over 84's Christmas tea party as it had done three times during the year.

## January 2025

- Chief Officer Jayne Cooper announces the sad news of stepping down from her role after 17 years of dedication.
- Following recommendations from NALC, GPC agreed to transition from the org.uk to gov.uk domain name for its website and emails.

## February 2025

- Section 56 notices drawn up to address severe road defects affecting local residents and businesses.
- Work commenced on the new gov.uk website.
- The Chief Officer and Chair meet with residents who have expressed an interest in joining GPC as councillors.

## March 2025

- The GPC Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Financial Risk Assessments were reviewed and updated for 2025-2026.
- Risk assessments were undertaken on the parish office, store, cellar and storage container.
- The new gov.uk website was launched, with the new domain name being [www.gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk).
- Six new councillors were co-opted onto the parish council.
- A public meeting was held in the Grosvenor Centre to discuss the proposal of development on land between Wharf Road and Newport Road.
- Our new Chief Officer, Jennifer Marshall is appointed.

THIS 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY LOCK-UP WAS RE-SITED BY GNOSALL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE TO COMMEMORATE THE N.F.W.I. GOLDEN JUBILEE DECEMBER 1971.

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reflecting on the past year, Gnosall Parish Council has been at the heart of our community's development and resilience. From tackling infrastructure issues to supporting local events, our committees have worked tirelessly to keep the parish thriving.

## GROSVENOR & EVENTS

The Grosvenor & Events Committee has had a successful year, overseeing the Grosvenor Centre and organising key community events. The Christmas Lights Switch-On was well attended, though lower cash donations highlighted the need for alternative payment options.

The Grosvenor Centre continues to thrive thanks to Jordan Archer of ACP Bars, who has run so many new and exciting events in the village, and increased bookings at the venue. We held a successful Open Day promoting its use to the wider community. Looking ahead, we aim to enhance event planning, boost community participation, and ensure financial sustainability. We encourage residents to attend events, volunteer, and help shape future activities.

## RESOURCES & PERSONNEL

The Resources & Personnel Committee has ensured effective financial and staffing management. A balanced budget and precept for 2025/26 were set, and two new staff members have settled in well. Rising insurance costs posed challenges, but successful grant funding has supported key projects.

The committee also reviewed staff contracts and training, ensuring compliance and development. Looking ahead, we remain committed to sound financial planning, staff support, and resource management to maintain efficient operations. Ensuring the council remains well-resourced and financially stable will continue to be a priority.

## PLANNING

The Planning Committee has been active in reviewing applications, addressing development concerns, and engaging residents. Work on the Neighbourhood Plan continues, with a Pre-Project Board created with Wrekin Housing regarding possible development of land off Knightley Road.

Concerns over solar farms in Moreton led to public meetings, and possible housing developments near Wharf Road continue to be monitored. Flooding in Outwoods remains a major challenge, with ongoing advocacy for solutions. The committee will continue pushing for responsible development, infrastructure improvements, and strong community engagement in planning matters to ensure the best outcomes.

## OPEN SPACES & BURIAL GROUND

The Open Spaces & Burial Ground Committee has focused on maintaining and improving green spaces. A five-year management plan for The Acres has been developed, and tree inspections and boardwalk repairs have ensured public safety. Flooding led to 10 allotment plots returning to nature, and ROSPA inspections confirmed the safety of recreational areas. Looking ahead, the committee

will continue working to preserve open spaces, manage burial grounds, and address environmental challenges.

## PRC & H&S

The Procedures Review Committee (PRC) has been working on reviewing and updating policies, regulations and documentation in line with NALC recommendations, and has approved Financial Regulations, Risk Assessments and Standing Orders for 2025.

Health & Safety (H&S) has become an important feature of all our lives and the parish council is responsible for facilities used by the general public, so our standards must be of the highest. We have continued to use and refine our Risk Inspections of premises and events, at all times focused on maintaining a safe environment for users, staff and colleagues. This can sometimes be challenging when our premises, such as The Grosvenor Centre, are not as young as they were, but regular inspections and swift action where necessary ensure that activities can go ahead safely.



## COUNCILLORS & STAFF

### COUNCILLORS

Cllr Pat Alker								
Cllr John Beswick								
Cllr Mary Booth								
Cllr Gail Gregory (Chair)								
Cllr Chris Haycock (Vice Chair)								
Cllr Chris Herbert								
Cllr Martin Holmes								
Cllr Gren Knight								
Cllr Bob Middleton								
Cllr Keith Parry								
Cllr Laura Pearson								
Cllr Aaron Reeves								
Cllr Mike Sullivan								
Cllr Graham Symons								
Cllr Wayne Titley								

### STAFF

- Jennifer Marshall - Chief Officer
- Michelle Farmer - Council Support Officer
- Mavis Hill & Jon Cook - Caretakers
- Finance Assistant - Vacant

# GROUP REPORTS

We're lucky to have some truly brilliant parish council-supported groups in the village, each playing a vital role in community life. From organising local events and activities to taking care of our facilities, and supporting the younger members of our parish, these groups play a vital role in making our parish a better place to live.

## BEST KEPT VILLAGE GROUP

In Nov '24 after being a volunteer for the Best Kept Village team for a year. It came about that I was taking over from Dave Clarke who had been wanting to step back for a while. This role hadn't even entered my mind but I certainly am glad it happened. I've never had so much enjoyment from doing community work.

Growing on from Dave Clarke's amazing foundation that he built over the years, the team are coming out this year in full force. Our main focus is community! Every year we enter the BKVC competition and it may take us a few years to get back up there in the winning spot but we shall be there again.

I am truly grateful to be surrounded by kindly, generous people who live in Gnosall who also donate their time to support our beautiful village. I am proud to live here!

**Laura Pearson, Gnosall BKV**



Another successful food bank charity donation run, December 2025

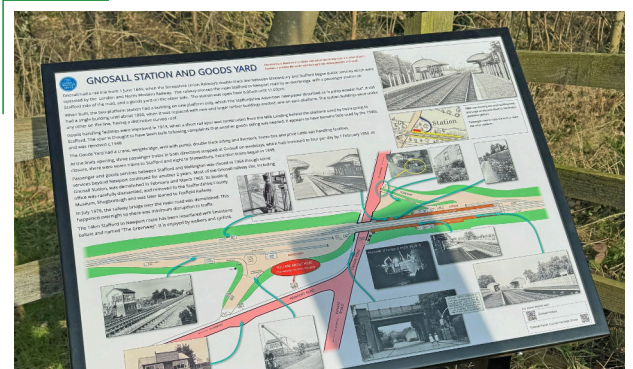
## GNOSALL HERITAGE GROUP

This year has seen considerable activity by members of the group.

The blue plaque scheme commenced with the Parochial School (Gnosall Nursery) supported from a £220 grant by the Parish Council. Quickly followed by the replacement sign at the Lock-up with Coton Mill and Greene's in the pipeline. A successful SCC Community Fund bid resulted in the impressive Railway Station sign.

Newssheets have been created to record all research conducted by members, including, windmills & watermills, Lollipop Express rail crash, Steevans teddy bear, Postal services, Gingercroft and the Belcher family, Miss Hobley, Moreton's WWI war casualties, School and Church.

**Malcolm Price, Gnosall Heritage Group**



New signage installed, depicting the old railway and station, February 2025

## TOWPATH RESTORATION GROUP

Gnosall Towpath Restoration - volunteers doing what they can when they can to keep the towpath looking loved, beautiful and an asset for the village.

In the last twelve months, volunteers supported by youngsters on their Duke of Edinburgh Award, have removed litter, widened the towpath at several pinch points, laid 18 tonnes of gravel, installed new drainage systems and cleared many areas of vegetation along the 1.48 kilometre stretch from Cowley Tunnel to bridge 36.

Daffodil bulbs were planted along the banksides, flower and herb gardens tended for villagers to enjoy. Volunteers also organise the annual and hugely successful Gnosall Canal Festival in July.

**Martin Wright, Gnosall Towpath Restoration**



## GNOSALL LIBRARY, ENVIRONMENT & NATURE

Over the last year it's been business as usual for the library which is going from strength to strength. Statistics show that last year more books had been issued than the year before which also confirms the need to have a library in the village.

Once again, the library participated in Staffordshire County Council's Summer Reading challenge and mini challenge which aim to encourage children to continue to read throughout the summer holiday. The challenge is a wonderful way to introduce young preschool children to the joy of books whilst supporting older children to participate in the challenge to broaden their reading experience and fire their imagination.

Baby Bounce and Rhyme continues to be an extremely popular event with numbers significantly increasing over the year. There are many families that are new to the village and this event is an opportunity to make friends and enjoy a friendly chat in a safe and comfortable environment.

The library continues to hold monthly events namely Family History, a Reading Cafe and Gnosall Writers. Everyone is welcome to join any of these events.

Library volunteers manned a stall at the Carnival and ran a 'guess the book' competition and people could go along to the library to have a look around or take out a membership on the day.

The success of the library and its events depends solely on its 26 volunteers, GLEAN Hub Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every volunteer for their enthusiasm and dedication in keeping the library open and running smoothly.

Pat Alker, GLEAN Hub



Please see [www.gnosall-library.org.uk](http://www.gnosall-library.org.uk) for opening times and details of events.

## GG's YOUTH CLUB

GG Youth club has had its up and down over the last year, with a delayed opening due to a flood, and a lack of volunteers meaning having to shut on some nights. But we are super excited for the summer.

We now have DofE Scheme students on board, the weather is getting nicer and the children love being outside. We hope to gain more volunteers to support the youth club allowing us to continue to open on a regular basis.

Laura Pearson, Councillor, Gnosall Parish Council

## REPORTING

### REPORTING DAMAGE

Report any damage to playground equipment, burial areas, allotments and sensory garden to the Parish Council on (01785) 822685.

### REPORTING FLY TIPPING

All fly tipping should be reported to Stafford Borough Council on (01785) 619000 so they can take action.

### REPORTING POTHoles

Potholes should be reported online at Staffordshire County Council's website at [staffordshire.gov.uk](http://staffordshire.gov.uk).

## SERVICES & FACILITIES

### GROSVENOR CENTRE

Available to hire for private functions and meetings. (01785) 822685

### GNOSALL VILLAGE HALL

Available to hire for private functions and meetings. (01785 822024)

### GNOSALL LIBRARY

Located behind the Grosvenor Centre on Gnosall High Street. (01785) 895750

### ST LAWRENCE CHURCH

Open for private prayer from Monday to Saturday from 10am to 5pm. (01785) 822820

### GNOSALL METHODIST CHURCH

1st and 3rd Sundays each month at 10.30am for worship. (01785) 229973


### GNOSALL FIRE STATION


Wharf Road, Gnosall (01785) 898525


### GNOSALL FIRST RESPONDERS


Chair: Ann Andrews (01785) 823331


## PARISH COUNCIL

 01785 822685

 Grosvenor Centre, High Street, Gnosall, ST20 0EX

 [clerk@gnosallparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@gnosallparishcouncil.org.uk)

 [gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://gnosallparishcouncil.gov.uk)

 [facebook.com/gnosallpcadmin](https://facebook.com/gnosallpcadmin)