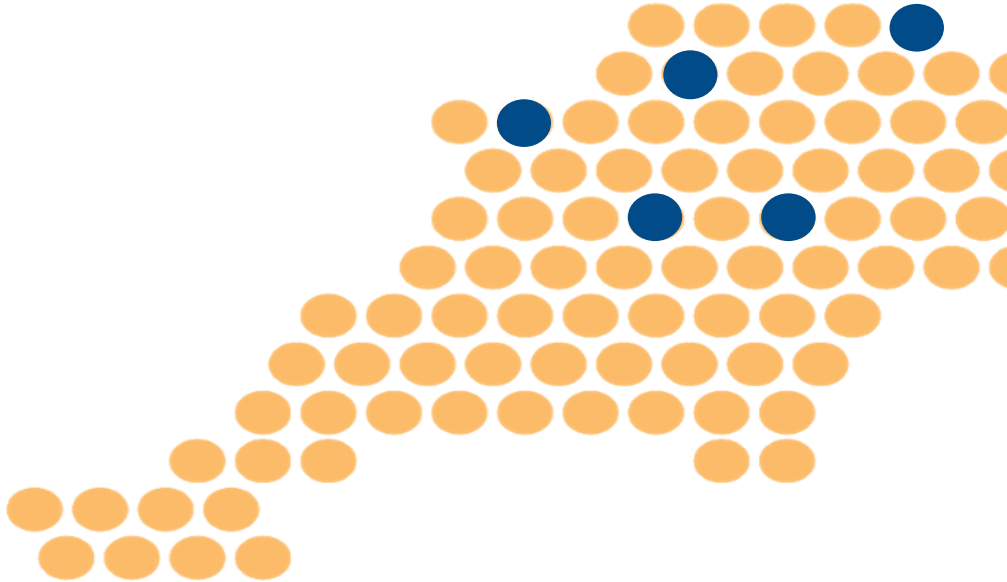
The difference we make to Somerset

1st April 2023 – 30th September 2023

citizens advice Somerset

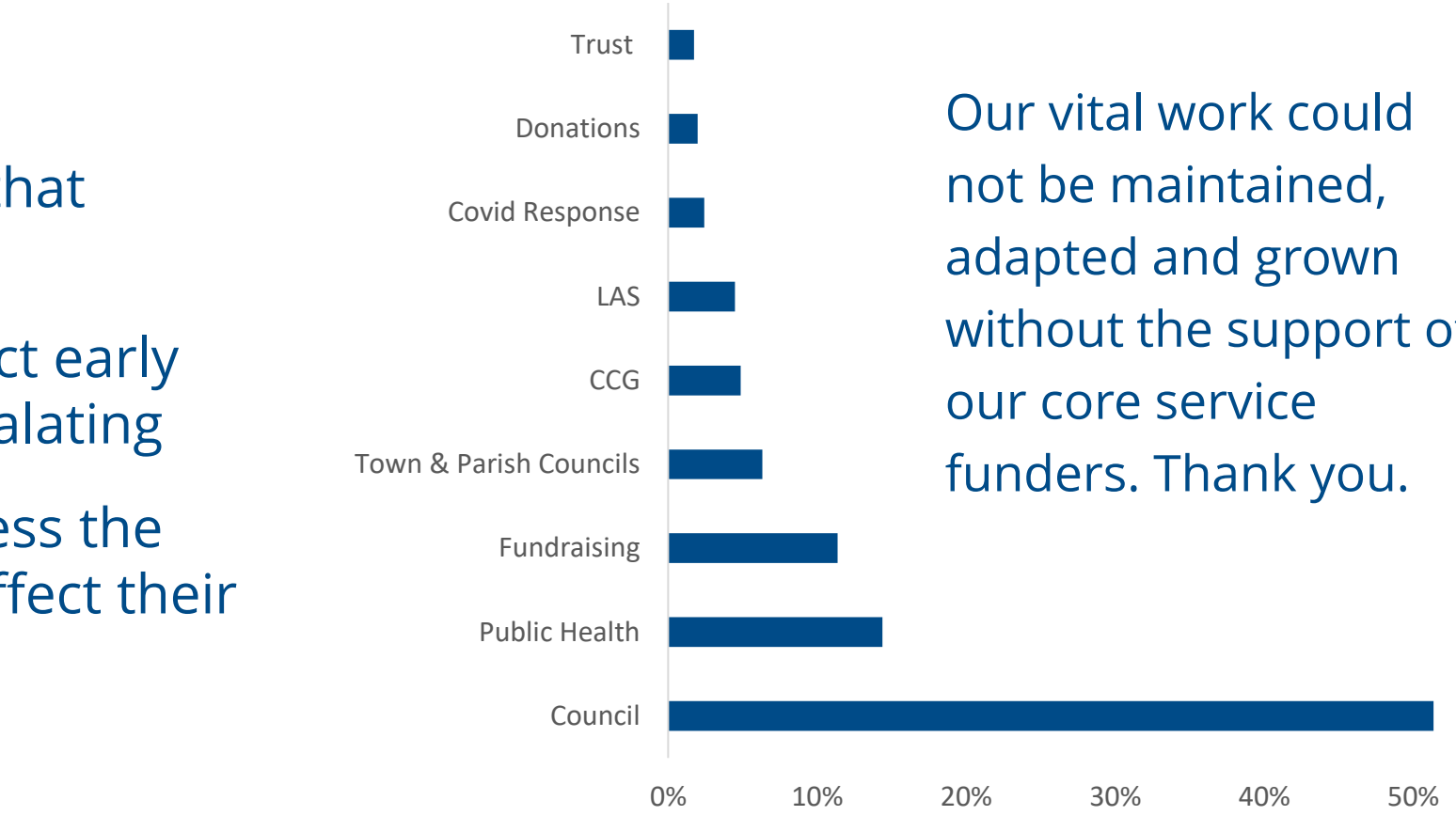


What we do

citizens advice Somerset Core Service

We provide a high quality, responsive advice service that meets clients' needs:

- empowering them to act early to avoid a problem escalating
- enabling them to address the issues that adversely affect their lives



Our vital work could not be maintained, adapted and grown without the support of our core service funders. Thank you.

How we help

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

Our service assists people in different ways, depending on their needs and issues. Many people receive multiple ‘tiers’ of help.

Simple Queries

- Specific information with no exploration needed
- Signposting and warm transfers
- Also known as Quick Client Contacts

Information

- Exploration of the issue
- Publicly available information *provided*
- Client interprets information and makes decisions themselves

Advice

- Holistic assessment and diagnosis of issues
- Tailored advice *explained*
- Assisting clients with key actions and next steps

Casework

- Specialist assessment and diagnosis of issues
- Take responsibility for progressing clients case
- Ongoing advocacy on behalf of clients to resolve issues

Who have we helped?

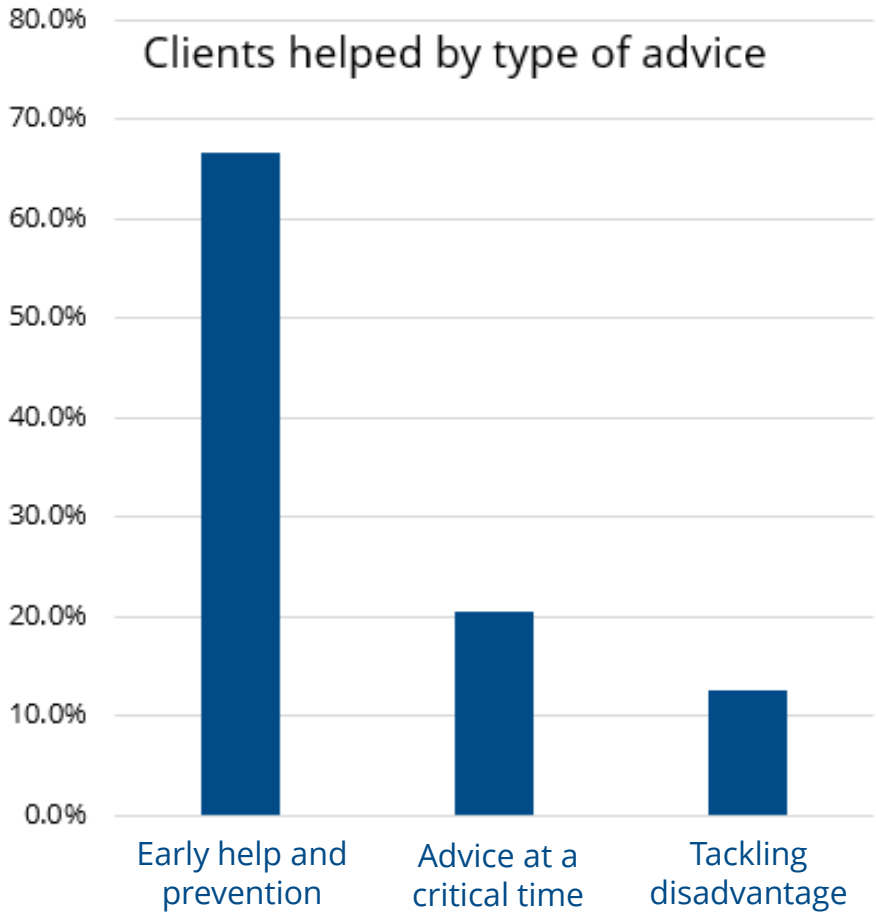
citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

Between 1st April 2023 – 30th September2023 our core service was open to anyone in need of advice.

For people with complex problems or specific needs, specialist help was available through our variety of funded projects:

14,152

Clients helped



Recorded financial outcomes

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

Where we know the financial outcome of advice, we record this under the four main categories below. **It is important to note we often do not know the financial outcome.**

Income maximisation
Additional cash in client's pocket
e.g. benefits awards, appeals won

Core service	Whole service
£1,117,525	£5,122,636

Debt written off
Money no longer owed
e.g. Debt Relief Order

Core service	Whole service
£121,173	£1,054,736

Repayments scheduled
Debt still owed, but manageable repayments agreed and set up

Core service	Whole service
£7,309	£59,023

Reimbursements
Financial benefit but not gain,
e.g. social care costs reduced

Core service	Whole service
£31,947	£121,271

Cost-benefit analysis

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

As we cannot know the financial outcome of our advice for all clients, we also estimate the value of our advice using a Treasury approved model developed by New Economy (now merged with Greater Manchester Combined Authority).

For every **£1** invested in Citizens Advice Somerset in the financial year 2022/23, we generated:

Fiscal value

£3.46

Financial savings to local and national Government due to fewer payments for out-of-work benefits, costly evictions, re-housing evicted tenants and less demand on the NHS.

Public value

£26.46

When people have fewer problems they have higher levels of wellbeing, participation in society and productivity. Our calculation of public value also includes the value of a volunteer run service.

People we help

£12.76

We help individual clients to achieve individual financial outcomes like getting back-dated benefits, writing-off debts and refunds for consumer issues.

Whole service key stats

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

This data represents our key stats for the **whole service** (core and projects) delivered by CA Somerset between 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

Clients



14,152

We count the number of **unique clients** we have helped in the reporting period – clients are only counted once regardless of number of interactions.

Issues



45,220

Clients often present with complex, **interrelated problems**. Multiple issues are recorded to describe the full breadth of any one client's advice needs.

Activities



65,621

Counting activities provides insight into **workload** – we count each interaction between advisers, clients and third parties and which channel is used.

Cases



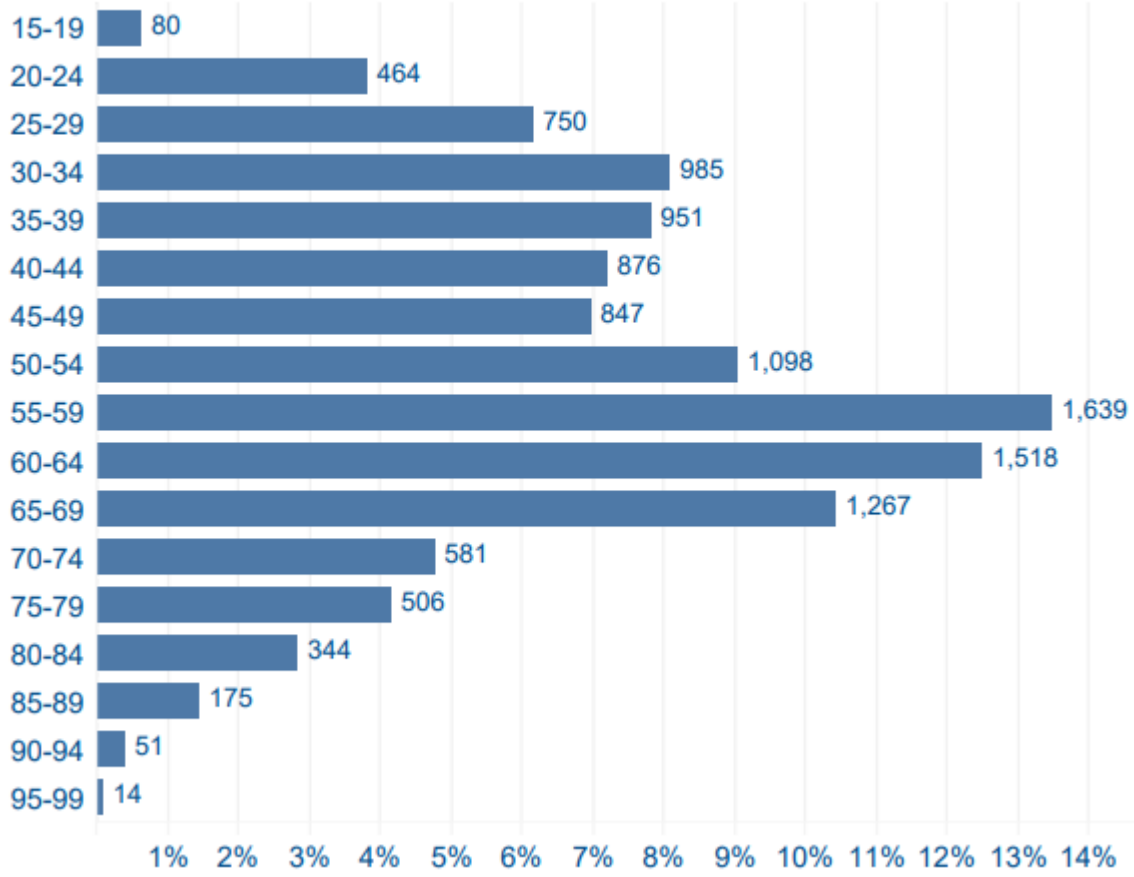
12,448

We count the number of **new cases** opened. A case is a kind of virtual 'file', made up of the activities, issues and channels used. Clients can have more than one case.

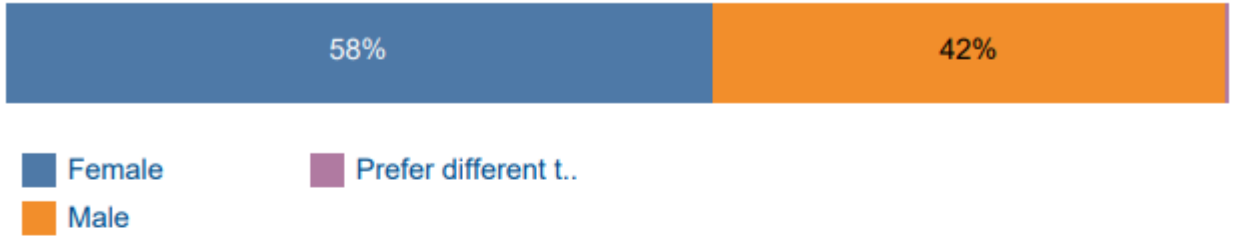
Client demography

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

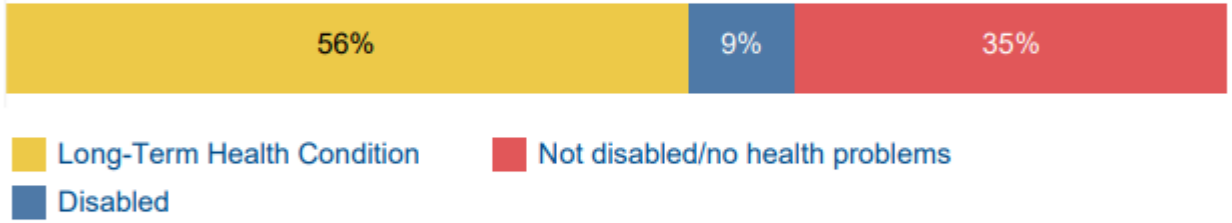
Age



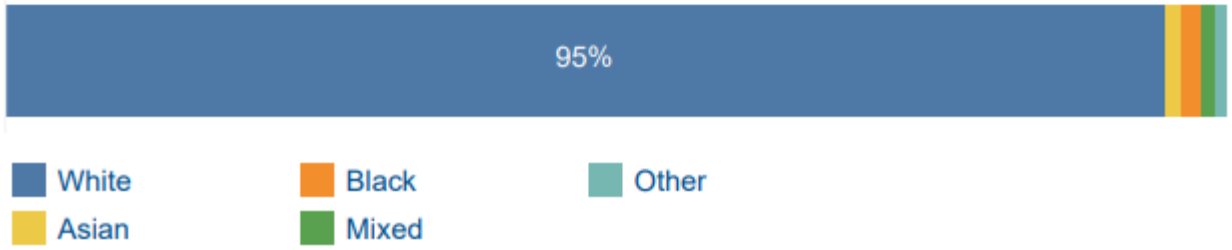
Gender



Disability / Long-term health



Ethnicity



Follow-on advice

citizens advice Somerset Core Service

The impact of the advice and follow-on support our advisers deliver can be significant:

Laura* experienced years of domestic violence, significant financial abuse and coercive control, leaving her with anxiety and panic.

After bravely ending the relationship - and despite being very scared - Laura came to us for help and advice with the significant debts that had been obtained in her name. In addition, she linked advice needs regarding the joint tenancy and claiming benefits. Her goal was to provide a safe and financially secure home for her children.

We assisted Laura with her Universal Credit claim and a Wessex Water assist application, referred her to a Legal Aid solicitor for housing help and then drafted a financial statement.

Laura was advised about all her debt options and the pros/cons of each so she could make an informed decision about her next step. She chose to apply for a Debt Relief Order so she could have a fresh start.

Laura is now debt free and living with her children in a safe home and financially stable.



* Not real name

Follow-on advice

citizens advice Somerset Core Service



Arthur* was in his 70s and grieving the loss of his wife. They had lived together in a rented home on the farm where he worked for nearly 40 years. Two months after she died Arthur's landlord gave him notice to leave.

We maximised Arthur's income by applying for Attendance Allowance and ensuring he received a Blue Badge.

We advised Arthur on his housing rights and options, helped him to register for Homefinder Somerset and obtain relevant supporting evidence. We assisted Arthur make a homelessness application to ensure he didn't become street homeless.

We also ensured Arthur had appropriate wellbeing support whilst he navigated leaving his home and processed his grief.

Arthur is currently living in temporary housing, with sufficient income, whilst he awaits appropriate longer term supported accommodation.

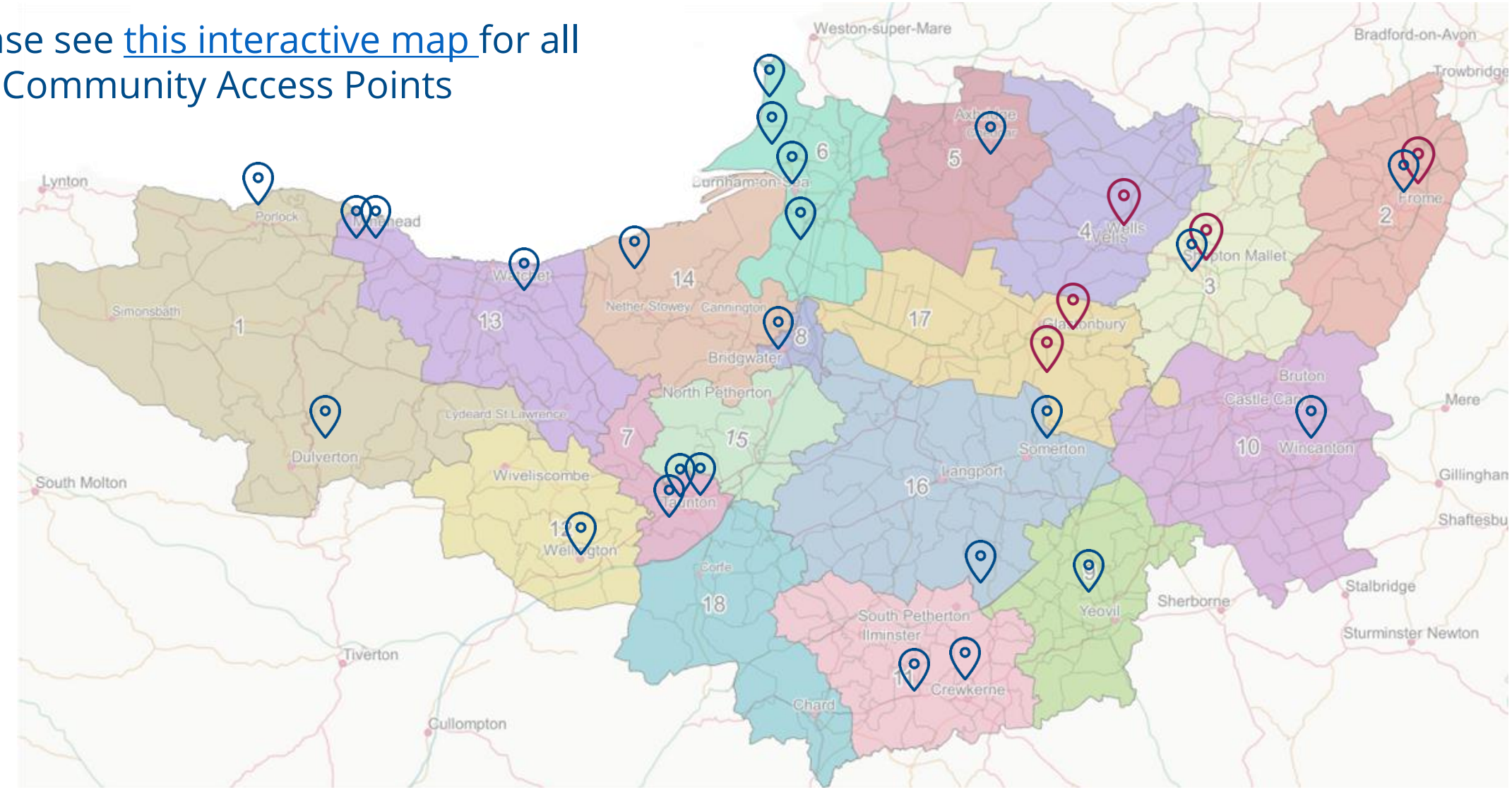
* Not real name

Where we help

Key
- Community Access Point or drop-in
- Advice Enquiry Kiosk

citizens advice Somerset Core Service

Please see this interactive map for all our Community Access Points



Issues

citizens advice Somerset Core Service

Clients have complex, interrelated problems due to their circumstances and support needs.

We refer to these as issues and record three levels of information:

Category: This is the main category of the problem e.g. benefits, debt or housing.

Subject: This is more detailed information like the type of benefit e.g. Attendance Allowance, or debt e.g. rent arrears

Detail: This is the type of advice we give e.g. eligibility for benefits

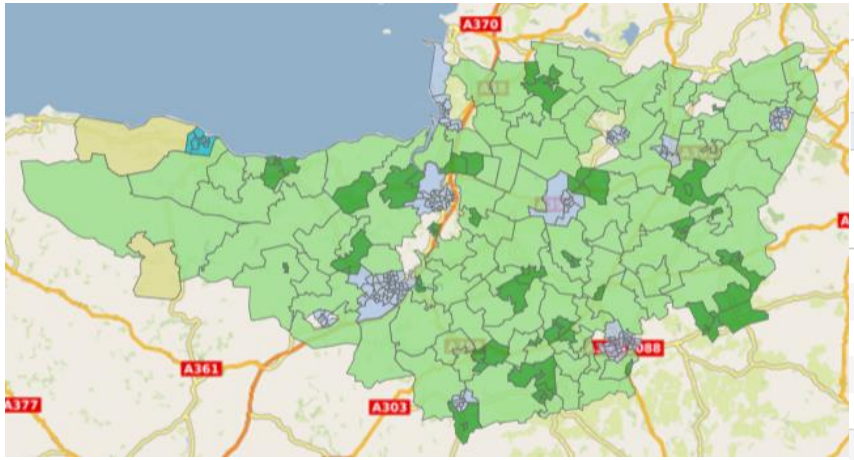
April - September Core Service Issues (category)

	Issues	Clients
Benefits & tax credits	5,874	2,463
Benefits Universal Credit	1,936	961
Charitable Support & Food Ban..	1,616	747
Consumer goods & services	892	513
Debt	2,666	1,098
Education	114	74
Employment	1,519	660
Financial services & capability	454	354
GVA & Hate Crime	206	116
Health & community care	427	248
Housing	2,977	1,286
Immigration & asylum	387	196
Legal	1,124	716
Other	103	99
Relationships & family	1,736	944
Tax	197	149
Travel & transport	255	194
Utilities & communications	594	363
Grand Total	**23,077**	

Rural/urban dashboard

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

- urban city and town
- urban city and town in a sparse setting
- rural town and fringe
- Rural village
- rural town and fringe in a sparse setting



Urban 60%	Rural 40%

	%	Clients
Urban	60%	11,145
Rural	40%	7,530
Grand Total	**100%**	**18,675**

	%	Clients
Urban city and town	57%	10,640
Urban city and town in a sparse setting	3%	505
Rural town and fringe	19%	3,629
Rural Village	20%	3,816
Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting	0%	85
Grand Total	**100%**	**18,675**

Gender	Urban	Rural	All
Female	59%	60%	59%
Male	41%	40%	41%
Prefer different term (Other)	0%	0%	0%

Disability	Urban	Rural	All
Disabled	10%	9%	10%
Long-Term Health Condition	51%	51%	51%
Not disabled/no health problems	39%	40%	40%

Age Group (group)	Urban	Rural	All
<26	5%	4%	5%
25-29	9%	6%	8%
30-34	10%	8%	9%
35-39	10%	8%	9%
40-44	9%	7%	8%
45-49	8%	7%	8%
50-54	9%	9%	9%
55-59	9%	11%	10%
60-64	9%	11%	10%
>64	20%	29%	24%

	Urban city and town	Urban city and town in a sparse setting	Rural town and fringe	Rural Village	Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting
Benefits & tax credits	55%	4%	20%	21%	1%
Benefits Universal Credit	58%	2%	20%	19%	0%
Charitable Support & Food B..	65%	3%	17%	15%	1%
Consumer goods & services	57%	2%	20%	21%	0%
Debt	61%	3%	19%	16%	1%
Education	64%	2%	17%	16%	1%
Employment	60%	2%	17%	20%	0%
Financial services & capability	54%	2%	19%	24%	1%
GVA & Hate Crime	63%	1%	19%	16%	0%
Health & community care	56%	3%	17%	23%	1%
Housing	60%	2%	18%	19%	0%
Immigration & asylum	70%	1%	14%	15%	0%
Legal	58%	1%	19%	21%	0%
Other	53%	3%	18%	25%	1%
Relationships & family	60%	2%	19%	20%	0%
Tax	60%	2%	19%	19%	0%
Travel & transport	50%	1%	23%	26%	0%
Utilities & communications	59%	3%	18%	18%	1%
Grand Total	**57%**	**3%**	**19%**	**20%**	**0%**

Quality of Advice Assessment

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

We use the national QAA framework to ensure our work maintains good standards.

Sample cases are reviewed for **accuracy and appropriateness of advice** and **case administration**, assessing:

- How well the needs of the client have been understood and what their issues were.
- The advice given, and the research recorded, to ensure accuracy and relevancy.
- Whether there were related or missed advice issues and how this impacted the client.
- Whether appropriate next steps were identified, and a plan agreed with the client.

These cases are scored using RAYG to enable conversations between advisers, supervisors and the quality team about how to work together to ensure that clients get the best advice we can give.

aqs advice quality standard

We continue to attain the highest ranking for both **accuracy and appropriateness of advice** and **case administration**.

Our people

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

The team delivering our service at 1st October 2023:

81 paid staff

66.35 FTE

117 volunteers

27.28 FTE

Estimated value **£976,000** pa

Volunteers

citizens advice Somerset Whole Service

We asked our volunteers why they volunteer for Citizens Advice so we could bring their voices directly to you:

"Helping clients achieve peace of mind when under debt pressures."

"Helping so many clients be successful at their PIP appeals."

"Hearing the tone of a client's voice change when you have helped them."

"Campaigning on the Cost of Living."

" It helps me to look after my mental and physical health."

"Achieving a positive outcome for a client."

"It's an open, friendly and supportive environment."