

Somerset Lifeline Service

Annual Report 2025-2026



Somerset Lifeline Annual report April 2025 – March 2026

It's been a very busy and challenging year with Somerset Council facing a severe financial crisis. While the council has taken steps including a significant workforce reduction of over 700 staff by April 2025, and the sale of assets, Somerset Lifeline has seen increased investment due to the critical importance and successful nature of our service.

We will be offering the Lifeline service to residents in the Mendip area of the County, an area that previously did not have a Council Lifeline service and have recruited additional team members to enable this. We're not quite ready to offer the Emergency Response Service in this area yet but we intend for this to happen as soon as customer demand reaches the right level.

In our last annual report, we explained that we had some issues with Direct Debits, we're pleased to say that, working closely with our colleagues in the Council's finance teams, we have resolved these issues and have also changed our process, so wasteful monthly invoices are no longer needed.

Call Handling and Monitoring

Between the 1st of April 2025 and 31st of March 2026 Somerset Lifeline handled 295,876 calls. These include Lifeline Monitoring Calls, Out of Hours calls for our Council and others, test calls from our customers, calls requiring the emergency services or our own Emergency Response Team attendance, smoke alarm activations, carbon monoxide detectors, heat detectors and reminders to take medication.

Of course, we also make many out-going calls following up on your calls for assistance and making sure everything is ok, plus making welfare and reassurance calls.

- 94.6% of these calls were answered within 60 seconds. Our target for calls answered within 60 seconds is 97.5%.

- 99.15% were answered within 180 seconds. Our target for calls answered within 180 seconds is 99%.

Business Continuity

Over the past year, we have continued to grow our team across the service to meet increasing demand, and we anticipate further expansion in the coming year to ensure we can continue delivering high-quality support.

We are also excited to introduce a new platform that will enhance the way we deliver TEC solutions to our customers and streamline our response service through a new response app. While calls will continue to be answered in the same way, the new platform will allow us to route enquiries to staff with the most appropriate skills, ensuring customers receive the highest standard of support.

We remain committed to offering our staff a healthy balance of home-based and work-place-based roles, which in turn strengthens our resilience and ability to deliver a reliable, responsive service.

Digital Switchover

A significant project was undertaken to upgrade the alarm service in Somerset prior to the completion of the national digital switchover, which has been completed ahead of schedule. In 2023, the UK Government announced an initiative to transition to digital-only telephone lines by the end of 2025; this deadline has since been extended to early 2027.

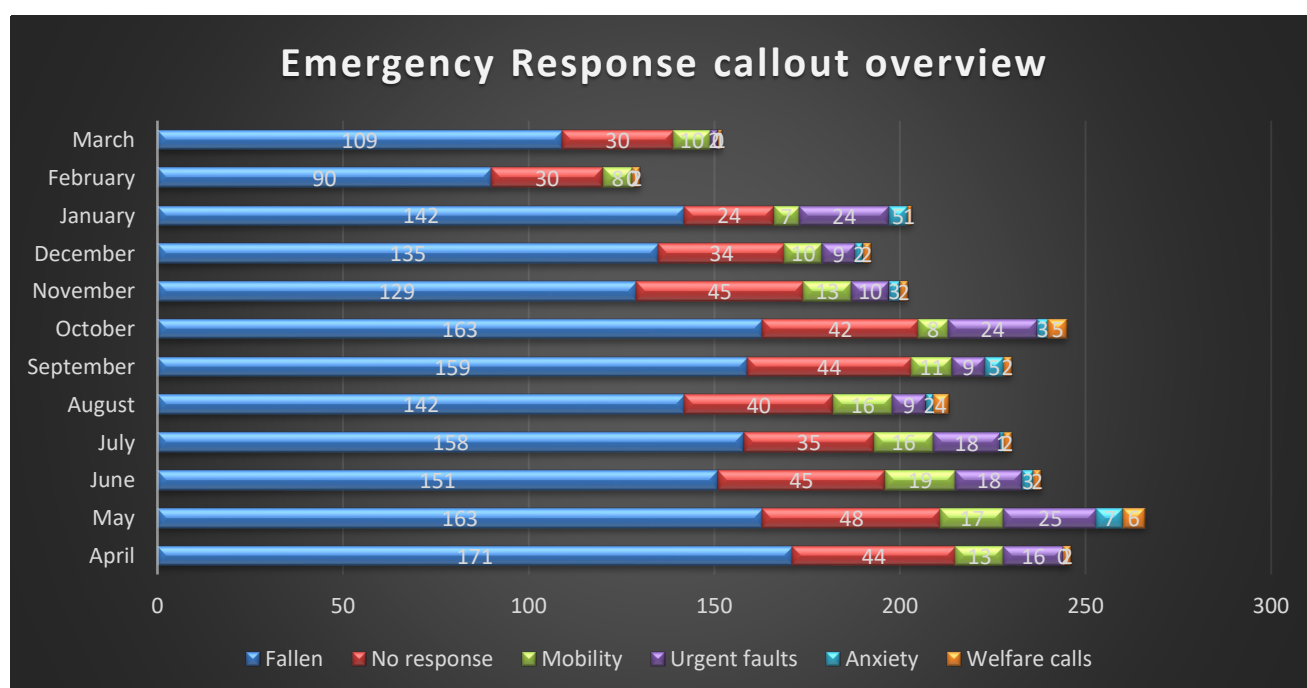
Over the past year, the Somerset Lifeline team successfully replaced more than 6,000 analogue units with new digitally enabled careline devices. These advanced units provide users with direct access to Somerset Lifeline's 24/7 monitoring centre, ensuring the ongoing safety and support of vulnerable residents throughout the region.

Through close collaboration with both service users and professionals, Somerset Lifeline has also implemented bespoke solutions for residents in remote areas with limited mobile signal or frequent power interruptions, thereby enhancing peace of mind for both users and their families. All upgrades were provided at no additional cost to Somerset Lifeline customers. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to customers for their cooperation and support during this process and is pleased to have completed the project ahead of schedule and under budget.

Response Service

Somerset Lifeline's response service continues to support our most vulnerable customers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As our service grows, we have expanded our coverage by introducing an additional daytime team in the West area. With the ongoing Mendip expansion project, we also aim to establish a further 24-hour team to enhance support for customers across the county.

Over the past year, our response team has attended 2,559 callouts, ranging from non-injury falls to essential welfare checks supporting our local ambulance service so they can focus on the most critical calls.



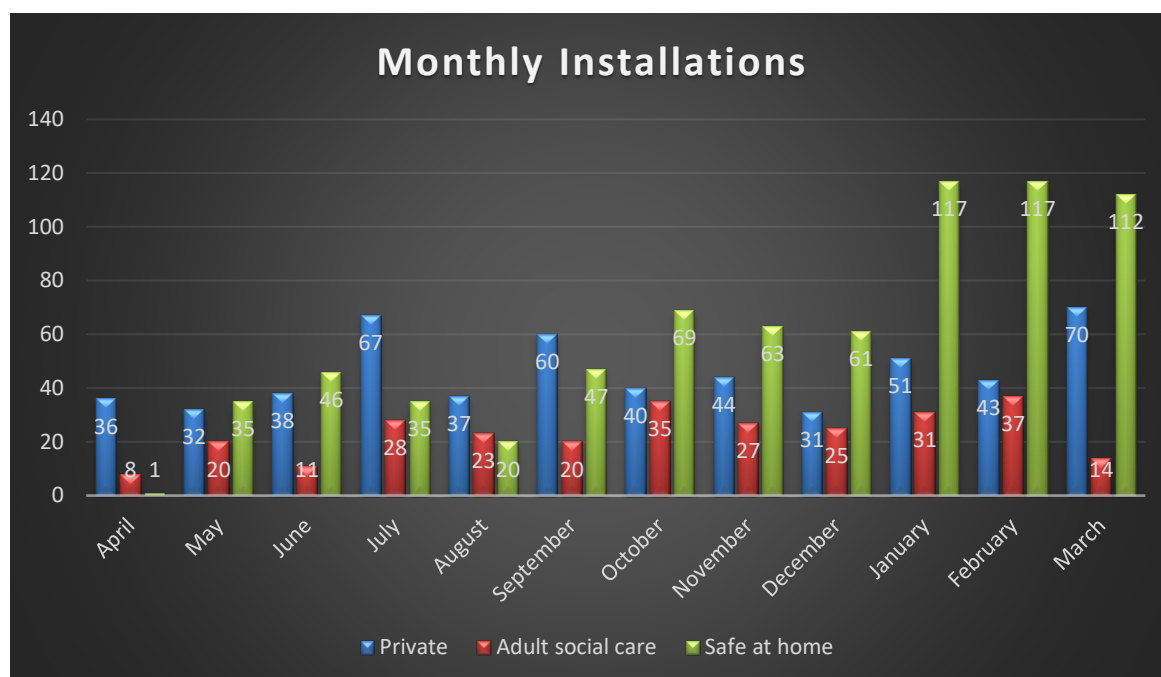
Installation team

In 2025–26, we expanded our Installation Team in response to the significant increase in referrals. We now have 12 Installers covering the county, ensuring prompt installation times for our most vulnerable customers.

We continue to invest in ongoing training to ensure our Installers remain fully up to date with our ever-evolving range of TEC devices. This enables them to provide tailored support for a wide variety of conditions, helping customers stay safe and independent in their homes for longer, alongside other support services.

We also support many customers who use our service for peace of mind, offering preventative assistance that helps maintain safety, confidence, and independence.

Below is an overview of the number of installations completed each month across the county. During 2025–26, our Installers successfully completed 1,551 installations for new customers across the Somerset area.



Over the last year, Somerset Lifeline has continued to provide reliable and compassionate support to thousands of residents across Somerset, and I am incredibly proud of what our service and our team have achieved.

Despite a challenging period for local government, we have strengthened and modernized Lifeline to meet growing demand. One of our most significant achievements has been completing the digital upgrade of more than 6,000 alarm units, ensuring customers remain protected as the national phone network moves digitally. This was delivered ahead of schedule and at no extra cost to customers.

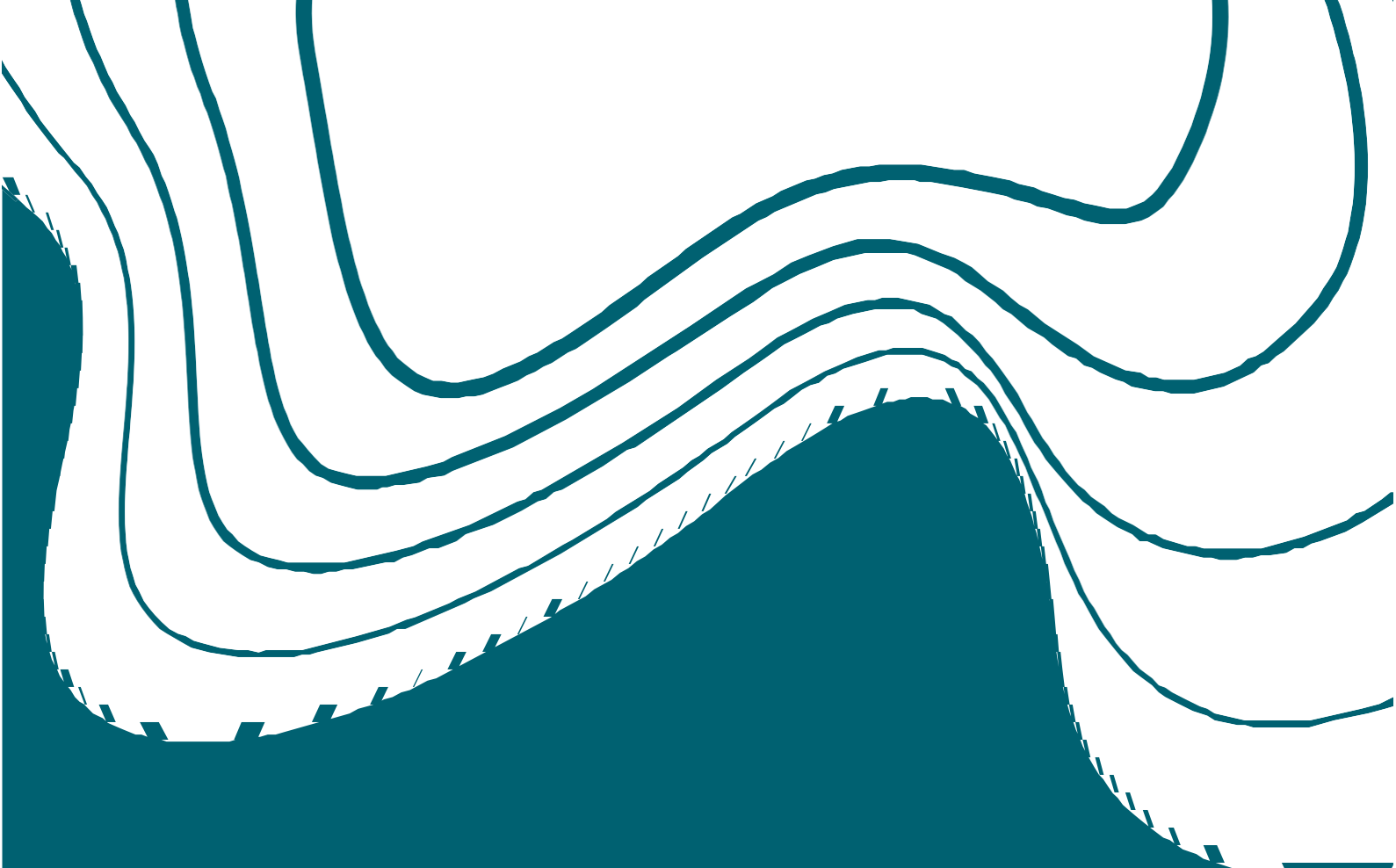
Our monitoring and response teams continue to perform at a high level, handling hundreds of thousands of calls and providing reassurance, emergency coordination, and vital welfare support. We have also expanded our workforce and improved resilience to ensure we are ready for the future.

Just as importantly, we continue to listen to our customers. The feedback and messages of thanks we receive remind us every day why this service matters.

Our commitment is simple: Somerset Lifeline will be there when you need us, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Richard Burge

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