

Plymouth Soup Run Report for February 2023

The month in numbers

- 2,270 meals served, equivalent to 81 per night, 7% up on both February 2022 and January 2023.
- 4,612 meals served year to date.
- 20-30 clients supported at each Saturday morning session.
- 10 referrals made to the Path Rough Sleeper Team.
- 46 sleeping bags or blankets given out.

Food supplies and donations

- We were grateful for our usual sources of redistributed food including FareShare South West, the Coop Depot and local stores.
- Additional food was purchased for most nights, sometimes mid run.
- Two regular supporters donated food for Saturday morning sessions.
- Volunteer Peter Gold raised £1,955 through participating in the Atlas Mountain Race in Morocco.
- A member of the public generously gave us £30 at the Hoe stop one night.
- Other donations included joggers from our Amazon wish list, plus toiletries, snacks, and sweets.

More than food

- Most nights, warm outer clothing, underwear, socks, and toiletries were distributed.
- We continued to provide 'warm goods' bought with a grant from PCC's Household Support Fund.
- Bus tickets donated by CityBus helped clients with mobility issues reach the night shelter.
- Clients with dogs are very attached to them, hence our collaboration with StreetVet. We had many requests for dog food and also to help a couple seeking accommodation that would allow pets.

Teams, partnerships and networking

- Teams had volunteers from several businesses including Fat Face and the Cornwall Bakery, and from services including NHS Devon, UHP Derriford, Livewell, and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue.
- Close collaboration continued with Alliance partners, especially Path and Shekinah.
- Path, Shelter and Plymouth City Council staff provided expert support especially at weekends.
- We provide support to SWEP implementation.
- The Soup Run and Path opened Shekinah one weekday to allow their staff to attend an away-day.
- Soup Run representative participated in meetings of the Rough Sleeper Strategy Implementation Group and Plymouth Food Aid Network, and delivered a webinar on Plymouth Soup Run's activities to the Student Faculty for Homeless and Inclusion Health.

Client health and wellbeing

- Volunteer podiatrists from Forgotten Feet joined two Saturday morning sessions.
- The Mass Vaccination Team gave winter flu and COVID-19 vaccinations at two Sunday sessions.
- Paramedics were called on two occasions to treat clients.
- Transport was provided to the Cumberland Centre for one client and to Derriford for two others.
- Teams reported back regularly on the wellbeing of a number of clients with mental health issues.
- The police contacted us regarding a vulnerable client, and provided prompt and sensitive support at a Saturday morning session.
- On one occasion, police officers intervened in tension between groups of clients at the first stop. Some clients were encouraged to use a different, less busy stop in future.

Quotes

- *"Lots of quite needy folk tonight who needed a listening ear."*
- *"Lovely to hear one man playing his guitar" (at a Saturday morning session).*
- *" Polite, respectful and courteous to a person ... humbling to experience."*
- *"... the willingness of people to share with each other, which is heart-warming."*
- *"Chocolate cakes in pink boxes given to all ladies by one of our team, a lovely gesture for Valentine's night."*