

Plymouth Soup Run Report for May 2024

The month in numbers

- 2,879 meals served, equivalent to 93 per night.
- 42 sleeping bags, 16 blankets and 5 roll mats given out.
- 35 referrals made to the Path Rough Sleeper Team.

Key points

- Numbers continue to rise significantly, with the total served in May 2024 being 3% higher than April 2024, and 16% higher than May 2023.
- Most clients are single people, but food was also provided to three families.
- Catering for increased numbers was challenging for teams, who sometimes had to restock mid-run. Support from food businesses via donations and volunteering was welcomed.
- The Household Support Fund (from the DWP via PCC) enabled us to help several clients with transport and energy costs, household necessities, and goods to ease the discomfort of rough sleeping.
- Lighter nights and (mostly) fine weather provided good opportunities to talk to clients who shared their concerns and their good news.
- Tensions, sometimes turning to aggression among clients and occasionally towards volunteers, meant that the run environment has had to be managed carefully, one night's team leaving a stop early as a result.
- Positive interactions with the police included their collecting food and clothing for a client in need, sharing information on missing persons, and driving to stops to provide visible support.
- Paramedic assistance was sought for a very unwell client, and first aid was dispensed to another.
- Soup Run representatives attended meetings of: Creative Solutions, Plymouth Food Aid Network, Changing Futures Volunteer Network, Next Meal Global Network, 4th Mental Health Collective, plus meetings on: rough sleepers, risk management, homelessness and intermediate care options.