

## **Plymouth Soup Run Report for July 2024**

### **The month in numbers**

- 3,118 meals served, equivalent to 101 per night.
- 44 sleeping bags and 23 blankets given out.
- 40 referrals made to the Path Rough Sleeper Team.

### **Key points**

- Numbers continued to rise as the summer progressed, with the total served in July 2024 being 4% higher than June 2024. However, the total is identical to that for July 2024, which was at that time our highest ever monthly total.
- Numbers fluctuated from day to day throughout the month, presenting a catering challenge and the occasional need to top up supplies during a run. The weather also fluctuated; on some nights teams had to replace rain-soaked sleeping bags and clothing, and on others, provide bottled water due to the heat.
- As well as routinely assisting rough sleepers with practical help, additional support was provided to two couples who had had their encampments vandalised.
- A high level of need was evident for many people, including some in accommodation yet struggling. This is an ever-present issue alongside concern for clients' mental health, but seems particularly acute currently, with the anxiety expressed by rough sleepers and people facing eviction featuring prominently in team reports.
- Some aggression was directed at volunteers but mostly from a small number of known clients with familiar grievances. Tension among some clients was managed by use of de-escalation skills. However, on two occasions, it was necessary for teams to activate agreed exit procedures to leave stops early.
- Intoxication was sometimes an issue and clients were reminded that our volunteers will not serve anyone visibly carrying alcohol.
- Some light moments lifted the spirits of both clients and volunteers: everyone's pleasure at seeing the big red CityBus arrive at the stops; clustering round a client's phone to share the excitement of England scoring a goal in the Euros; and being able to pass on the good news of accommodation being arranged for a client.