

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

### **The month in numbers**

- 3,041 meals served, equivalent to 98 per night.
- 40 sleeping bags and 8 blankets and 2 roll mats given out.
- 40 referrals made to the Path Rough Sleeper Team.

### **Key points**

- July and August have been our busiest months for several years. The total served this August was marginally less (by 2%) than July 2024 and 3% less than August 2023. The slight respite was welcome, but more than counterbalanced by increased anxiety and tension at times.
- No two nights on the Soup Run are ever the same, and August exemplified that with the busiest night serving more than twice the number of people seen on the quietest night. It was necessary to top up supplies twice due to especially high numbers. Sundays and Bank Holidays are particularly busy, reflecting the lack of other options for people.
- The fact that different teams serve on different nights ensures variety, this month enhanced by the novelty of having the CityBus 'Chatter Bus' bringing food to the stops, a burger van joining us one run, and the simple treat of sausage and chips on another.
- A man not previously known to us brought his four children to the first stop one night, underlining the safety net that we provide. However, we discourage clients from bringing children to the Soup Run, and make alternative arrangements via e.g. churches to provide food for families once identified.
- The Soup Run is used to adjusting to circumstances and special arrangements were planned well in advance to keep clients informed of arrangements during the fireworks championship and, with less notice, on-the-day arrangements were made on 5<sup>th</sup> August to ensure that the 90 people using the Soup Run were fed despite the protests in the city.
- The Soup Run has excellent relations with partners in the city and was grateful for responsiveness by the police when tensions boiled over into aggression among clients one night, and for paramedic attention in the case of a suspected overdose, when teams' training in the administration of naloxone came into its own.
- Both familiar and new clients with mental health concerns occupied volunteers' attention most nights, along with a few occasions when first aid was given to deal with, e.g., a fall and a leg wound.
- Our Saturday morning service for rough sleepers saw its busiest session ever on the last day of the month, reflecting the high number of people in the city who are street homeless. 35 people were supported with food, showers, clothes, advice and footcare, as needed.