

Plymouth Soup Run Report for April 2025

The month in numbers

- 2,874 meals served, average 96 per night (5% more than April 2024 and 15% more than March 2025).
- 50 sleeping bags and 24 blankets given out.
- 43 referrals made to the Path Rough Sleeper Team.

Key points

- **Changing of the seasons:** We expect higher numbers as the year progresses, so the significant increase over March was not unexpected but, on top of a steady year-on-year increase, this was challenging for teams. Despite good information sharing and increasing the amount of food prepared, extra supplies had to be provided mid-run on seven nights.
- **Weather extremes:** The month started with *"a bitterly cold wind"* and, by the middle of the month, heavy rain on many nights: *"on an extremely wet Good Friday ... amazed by how many people come and queue up in torrential rain to collect food"*. April saw 10 times the rainfall of March, and the highest level for 13 years. So, requests to exchange wet sleeping bags were no surprise, nor requests for dry clothing. Yet, at the end of the month as temperatures rose, *"water was in high demand ... and all service users were given bottles"*.
- **Mental health concerns:** Against a typical picture of *"an extreme level of complex needs tonight; lots of conversations"*, several clients well-known to teams presented particularly concerning or challenging behaviour requiring dedicated attention from volunteers. *"[A] needed some extra support - we ordered a taxi to take him home, to ensure he made it safely"*. *"[B] was still in a turmoil ... very agitated and verbally aggressive."* *"[C] was on the edge and extremely demanding"*. *"[D] was very, very low at the first stop"*. Staff from Livewell and HIPP (Health Inclusion Pathway, Plymouth) now join the Soup Run team once a fortnight providing much needed support.
- **Appreciative regular clients and new faces:** Despite occasional issues, there is strong mutual regard among clients and volunteers: *"A busy night characterised by warm humour and gratitude"*. *"An epically busy night ... everyone queued patiently"*. As ever, well-known clients who had good news e.g. regarding moving into accommodation, shared it enthusiastically. And a number of new people, many of them rough sleeping, were seen during the month and were grateful to be signposted to wider support.
- **Great teamwork and generosity:** The month saw some new volunteers joining teams, volunteer groups from local businesses active on many nights, and generous donations from food outlets and others enabling us to celebrate Easter with our clients. We were able to offer King's Trust students community outreach experience on several nights. All teams, supporting businesses and food donors are detailed in our social media posts.