

## Plymouth Soup Run Report for November 2025

### The month in numbers

- 3,041 meals served, average 101 per night (12% more than November 2024 and 13% more than October 2025).
- 69 sleeping bags, 26 blankets and 10 roll mats given out.

### Key points

- **Changing seasonal pattern:** The month was chilly throughout, and sometimes *"very wet, windy and cold"*. From when we began keeping detailed records in 2016 up to 2023, there has always been a drop in numbers from October to November. However, in 2024 and this year there was a significant rise. This suggests that the need for support is outweighing the need to stay in the relative warm either indoors or bedded down to sleep rough. Teams remarked: *"Considering the weather, numbers were very high at all stops."* *"Busiest night I have seen in three years! [We were] swamped at the first stop with sheer numbers and people with needs"*. Demand for sleeping bags, blankets and warm clothing was, as expected, high.
- **The run environment:** Other than remarking on the cold, the most common word used by teams to describe November evenings was *"calm"*. Occasional pockets of friction failed to dampen the generally positive mood, and one client who had behaved in a very challenging way several times in October came to apologise. A peaceful run is a successful one, in which food and other forms of support can reach all who need it.
- **Meeting needs:** Volunteers routinely check in with clients known to us and who have continuing difficulties as well as those less well known, and they look out for missing persons advised to us by local police. *"As always, a number of people needed to chat, explain things and ask for advice"*. Among many concerns that teams responded to were two clients in distress due to their children being taken into care, two others needing food for themselves and their young children, and yet others about to find themselves homeless. Fortunately, due to Project 58:7, a collaboration between Path and Transforming Plymouth Together, a new option has become available for rough sleepers. Although due to open in December, the project responded to the severe weather at the end of November, and we were able to refer people to the participating churches offering an indoor safe space at night.
- **Health matters:** The Soup Run was represented at community health events during November, giving the opportunity to raise awareness of our service and network with other providers. We continue to work closely with the Health Improvement Pathway, Plymouth, Livewell, the Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, and Forgotten Feet, always looking for ways to improve the health status and ambitions of our clients, and encourage their engagement with services. With specific winter health risks in mind, a team from University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust joined a run to administer flu vaccinations. Bus tickets were given to several people to enable them to attend hospital appointments.
- **Resourcing the service:** Donations are starting to come in for our Christmas Reverse Advent Calendar appeal. This means that we have been able to make an early start on providing clients with seasonal treats and necessities. In November, we received some generous cash donations and continuing public support via our Amazon Wish List. Our regular food sources, including individuals who collect surplus goods from supermarkets, along with generous donations from a school and from food businesses, continue to ensure that supplies meet growing needs. And the Household Support Fund, provided to us by Central Government via Plymouth City Council enabled us to help individual clients in crisis or struggling to meet the costs of moving into their own accommodation.