

Plymouth Soup Run Report for December 2025

The month in numbers

- 2,723 meals served, average 88 per night (5% more than December 2024 and 11% less than November 2025).
- 35 sleeping bags, 12 blankets and 1 roll mat given out.

Key points

- **Wintry weather sets in:** Although relatively dry for the second half of the month, December was very cold. High numbers of clients for the time of year were matched by appreciative and respectful behaviour for the most part. *"Steady queues, patiently waiting. Much gratitude for us being there to support them." "Many were shivering tonight so the hot food with a little spice was very welcome."* Hats, gloves, socks and warm clothing were in heavy demand throughout the month.
- **Project 58:7:** As noted in November's report, this project was launched as a collaboration between Path and Transforming Plymouth Together, involving four churches offering a safe indoor space for rough sleepers on five nights a week. In addition, SWEP (the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) was enacted on several nights as a Council response to threshold low temperatures being reached. Path staff and Soup Run volunteers signposted clients to the appropriate locations: *"It really felt different this evening being able to tell service users who had requested a sleeping bag to speak to Path about Project 58:7 accommodation."* Unsurprisingly, in view of this provision, the number of sleeping bags given out over the month dropped significantly, being half of the November figure.
- **Consistent service:** A key principle of the Soup Run service is that it goes out every night to the same places at the same times, and Christmas/New Year is no exception. We expect number to reduce a little, reflecting other food options available across the city, but even so, 586 meals were served over the eight nights from Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve, an average of 73 per night. Five years ago, the average was 49 per night.
- **Community support:** While the routine of the Soup Run was unchanged, thanks to the kindness of our supporters across the city, we were able to distribute gifts to clients on several nights, as well as treats and plentiful food from initiatives including the Plymouth Christmas Eve Food and Parcel project. Our Reverse Advent calendar appeal brought in an abundance of donations from families, schools, workplace teams, churches and social groups. And our Amazon Wish List also attracted an amazing response. Several businesses donated Christmas food in addition to their year-round support. Notable is the support that several teams receive from The Cornwall Bakery. In-kind contributions were balanced with generous cash donations that together enable us to meet needs in a comprehensive way. Donations have been gratefully acknowledged via social media.
- **Teamwork:** As ever, the Soup Run only happened throughout the month because of the efforts of our volunteers and collaborators which included medical and other university students, among them a team from Marjon who organised an entire run, fund raising, purchasing and preparing the food, and serving on the night. The welfare of the people we serve is an ongoing concern and was certainly on our minds as we gathered on 22nd December for a Service of Remembrance for those affected by homelessness whom we lost during 2025. In addition to the listening ear and compassionate conversations always offered by teams, clients benefited from professional healthcare support from Harbour (supporting smoking cessation with vapes) and from Forgotten Feet who held fortnightly podiatry clinics at the Saturday morning rough sleeper sessions that the Soup Run coordinates at Shekinah. Thanks are due also to the StreetVet volunteers who regularly joined us to tend clients' companion animals.