

Plymouth Soup Run Report for January 2026

The month in numbers

- 2,611 meals served, equivalent to 84 per night, plus 132 each of breakfasts and lunches served at Saturday morning rough sleeper sessions at Shekinah. Total number of meals served is 20% more than January 2025 and 5% more than December 2025.
- 57 sleeping bags, 4 blankets and 5 roll mats given out.

Key points

- **Winter weather:** *“Rain accompanied by strong winds as Storm Ingrid battered Plymouth”*
As ever, at this time of year, the weather impacted on services delivered on the streets to people, some of whom live on the streets. With only two completely rain-free days, January saw more than twice the monthly rainfall of a year ago. Sometimes combined with high winds and ice underfoot, this made delivering the Soup Run service both more challenging but also more important to those who depend on us. We would normally see a downturn in numbers mid-winter but that has not been the case of late.
- **Meeting needs:** As well as food, warm and dry clothing was in high demand, along with replacements for wet sleeping bags. The sense of community was ever present, as we recognised the importance to people of contact with the Soup Run. The weather definitely affected people’s mood and occasionally behaviour. Yet teams remarked that even when hostile weather meant that some clients collected their food and left quickly *“others were happy to stand and chat in the high wind and driving rain!”*. They also noted *“lots of positive comments and gratitude from those served”*.
- **Teamwork:** Representatives of Soup Run teams came together in January for our Annual General Meeting, where we reviewed the year gone by and planned the year ahead. We reflected on the size and diversity of our network of volunteers. Even wider teamwork was in sharp focus in January with close collaboration with Path and Transforming Plymouth Together (TPT) to facilitate placement of rough sleepers in the churches offering a safe indoor space for rough sleepers through Project 58:7. Some Soup Run team members also supported the project as evening and overnight volunteers. TPT’s new health and wellbeing lead joined one run, bringing the total number of different organisations all working together that night to five. StreetVet were out every Monday, and HIPV/Livewell/Harbour staff continued to support health needs regularly. With a new wave of ‘spice’ use in the city, teams were alerted to look out for anyone affected and provided with information on how to respond. On one night, a prompt response from paramedics to attend an unconscious person was appreciated.
- **Resourcing the service:** Some treats from our Christmas appeal were still available to share with clients in January. And we continue to be grateful to our regular suppliers and supporters who provide much of the food that we distribute. Two important sources of support enabling us to respond to specific needs were the Rough Sleeper Initiative and The Household Support Fund (HSF), both made available by Plymouth City Council from central government funding. As we closed the books on the last quarter of 2025, we were able to record the wide reach of the HSF. During the financial year to date, we had provided crisis support to 115 households, mostly of single people and all vulnerable in some way. These included a number of people moving to more stable situations and whom we were able to help with setting up home.