

Plymouth Soup Run Report for February 2026

The month in numbers

- 2,269 meals served, equivalent to 81 per night, plus 78 each of breakfasts and lunches served at Saturday morning rough sleeper sessions at Shekinah. Total number of meals served, at 2,423, is 11% more than February 2025 and 6% less than January 2025.
- 60 sleeping bags, 2 blankets and 5 roll mats were given out.

Key points

- **Another wet month:** February 2026 rainfall was the highest for the month in at least 15 years, and it rained on all but three days. Not surprisingly, teams commented on this: *"Terrible weather all night"* and *"Wet and soggy Soup Run"*. But, notably, the gratitude and good humour of clients was also remarked upon: *"An extremely wet and blustery evening when we saw many grateful folk."* *"Lots of wet but happy people."* Having new volunteers can be daunting for the volunteers themselves and the more experienced people supporting them, so it is always good to hear remarks like *"Newbies on the team commented on how polite and courteous clients were"*. The month was not without incidents but, fortunately, they were relatively rare occurrences, for which teams have response plans and seek the support of the police as necessary, which happened on one occasion.

- **Meeting needs:** As well as food, large quantities of clothing and toiletries were given out. Sleeping bags were in high demand. We feel, though, that had it not been for Project 58:7, many more would have been given out. Nightly runs provided an ideal opportunity for referrals to be made to the churches participating in the Project through collaboration between Path and the Soup Run. Teams are always on the look-out for clients with individual acute concerns, to help by signposting to specialist services such as Plymouth Energy Community or Citizens' Advice for those struggling with the cost of living, or helping directly through the Household Support Fund (provided by DWP/PCC). Catching up with people whom we have helped in the past and who are back on their feet is always a good experience: *"A former client from several years ago was walking by Martin Street and stopped to say how well he's doing now. Great to hear such a positive story."*

- **Health concerns:** On separate nights, two clients were extremely unwell, one attended to by paramedics and the other supported to return to his hostel for monitoring and further attention as needed. Mental health concerns were ever present, so we were grateful for support from Livewell and HIPP staff. We welcomed the new Health and Wellbeing Practitioner from Transforming Plymouth Together to the run one night and also to a Saturday morning lung health event. For this, we collaborated with Inhealth and Livewell to offer lung cancer screening and smoking cessation advice to people considered to be at risk. Teams looked out for an elderly vulnerable client reported missing, and one client traumatised by an assault was supported by delivery of food to their accommodation. Wet weather impacts on clients' health, as is very evident from the incidence of foot conditions due to wearing and walking in wet shoes. Fortnightly Forgotten Feet clinics held at Shekinah on Saturday mornings were well attended, with ten clients being treated by volunteer podiatrists at each. Several pairs of shoes were given out, and dry socks were routinely provided on nightly runs.

- **Resourcing and teamwork:** Thanks to good information sharing and forward planning, supplies always met needs on the street. Nevertheless, fluctuating numbers meant that, very occasionally, contingency supplies had to be drawn upon, or restocking done mid run. But every person on every night was fed. Differences from night to night bring pleasant surprises for clients such as the arrival of the CityBus Chatter Bus on one night, or meeting the Plymouth Argyle apprentices who organised and served on the run on another. Our thanks go to all who helped resource and volunteer their time to enable the service to operate over the month.