

## Case Study – Rough Sleeper

A single male had been rough sleeping since 2004 after he had been evicted from a Cross Keys Homes property for rent arrears. He did not engage with anyone; he refused to claim benefits, accept accommodation offers or register at a doctor, preferring instead to spend his time sitting on the grass opposite the volunteer fire station and sitting in Queensgate bus station.

He did not want to engage with any homeless services, his only regular attendance being the soup kitchen. On several occasions the bush where he slept was set on fire, but this still did not make him want to come into services. He was visited regularly by the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer but no clear progression was made. In April 2011 the Rough Sleeper Outreach Officer visited him alongside an officer from Peterborough Streets who had known him for quite some time. After regular visits a relationship was established with him by walking to Queensgate and having an informal chat and coffee.

Eventually the Outreach Officer started talking to him about the accommodation he had. The more time the officer spent with him and spoke to him it became clear that he had significant mental health issues. He had an assessment early in 2011 and at that time it was believed that he did not have any significant mental health issues and that he chose to sleep rough. The Outreach Officer contacted the Mental Health Team and they came out to complete another assessment on the client. After several joint visits, they decided that it would be in his best interest to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

Whilst in hospital the Outreach Officer visited him every week. Whilst he was being supported in the Cavell Centre food parcels were organised from Peterborough Streets. The Outreach Officer worked intensively with the staff there to ensure that he was not discharged back onto the streets. After a period of time he was transferred to the Lucille Van Geest Centre. Again, the Outreach Officer visited him there and explained to the staff his history of rough sleeping and the importance of being involved with his discharge to ensure a smooth transition to hostel accommodation. After weekly visits, rapport and trust was built up and after much persuasion he accepted help. When he was ready for discharge from hospital Housing Needs were able to provide him with accommodation in a hostel. The Outreach Officer drove him to the hostel accommodation, filled in his housing benefit form and ensured he had a food parcel there.

Close partnership working with the hostel manager, Peterborough Streets and the Mental Health Team has resulted in him being fully settled at the hostel accommodation. He is now waiting for social housing in the same area where he lived before. Through persistent engagement and partnership working, a very vulnerable client with complex needs is now in the process of getting his life back on track.

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