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Peterborough City Council's drive to help the homeless has resulted in 27 rough sleepers swapping the streets for a better life since April 2016.

Despite the sensitive and complicated nature of each individual's circumstances, all have been found somewhere safe to live.

The council's Housing Needs department has co-ordinated this help with the [Prevention and Enforcement Service](#) and other partner agencies.

One former rough sleeper, "Chris", has been helped by the council to get back on his feet. He said: "A young lady from the council gave me a break and a place to live. I had started to give up but now I can look ahead, I can see a future."

"Thomas" has also been helped off the streets by the council and says the assistance he had has completely transformed his life. He said: "I didn't know where to go but the help I got at Bayard Place was fantastic and without that help I would still be sleeping rough today."

Many towns and cities across the UK have experienced an increase in the number of people rough sleeping.

The big difference in Peterborough is that nobody has to sleep rough; everyone who finds themselves homeless has an offer of accommodation. Not every town and city adopts this approach.

There are a range of services and options that are made available and offered to every rough sleeper, including a winter night shelter and support for those who are struggling with mental health issues or are reliant on drugs or alcohol.

Councillor Irene Walsh, cabinet member for communities and environment capital, said: "It's fair to say there has been an increase nationally in the number of people sleeping rough and Peterborough is no different.

"But the fact remains that there is no need for anyone in our city to sleep rough; everyone who finds themselves homeless has an offer of accommodation. Not many towns and cities adopt that approach.

"However, some people are refusing to accept help for a number of different reasons. We continue to engage with these people and offer them support, should they require it.

"Homelessness is an emotive and problematic issue and one that requires a different approach for every individual. We've helped 27 rough sleepers to leave the streets in the past nine months and I am confident that our approach will allow us to continue changing lives for the better."

For more information about the support available for people who find themselves homeless or rough sleeping visit the [homelessness page](#).