

THE **SUN**

THE INNER-CITY WORKER

THAMES Reach chief executive **Jeremy Swain** worked as an outreach worker providing assistance to London's rough sleepers between 1984 and 1988.

On a single night in the mid-eighties there were around a thousand people sleeping rough in London.

The numbers of homeless then were considerably higher than they are now.

I remember the cardboard cities. The high num-



bers were due to some of the benefits changes introduced by the Thatcher government. People were struggling to survive and outreach workers like me had to help pick up the pieces.

Undoubtedly her policies led to an increase in the most visible form of homelessness around the UK capital.

By the late eighties the government launched the Rough Sleepers Initiative because the problem had got so great.