

We're ashamed of our 10-year split, say Boyle and McGregor

BY MARK JEFFERIES Showbiz Editor
DANNY Boyle and Ewan McGregor told last night of their "great shame" at falling out with each other for 10 years.
The director's rift with the actor happened more than 15 years ago when he cast Leonardo DiCaprio as the lead in his film *The Beach* rather than McGregor.
Boyle, 60, said: "I handled it very badly and I've apologised to Ewan." McGregor, 45,
APOLOGY Danny Boyle

appearing on *The Graham Norton Show* with the director, said he had felt "rudderless" at not being cast after appearing in Boyle's first three films – *Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting* and *A Life Less Ordinary*.
He said: "It's a big regret of mine it went on for so long and a real shame we didn't work together all those years."
McGregor, reunited with the original cast for *T2 Trainspotting*, said during the rift he and Boyle had blanked each other for the entire flight home from an awards ceremony in Shanghai.

TOP 10

All-time Liverpool goalscorers

1. Ian Rush
2. Roger Hunt
3. Gordon Hodgson
4. Billy Liddell
5. Steven Gerrard
6. Robbie Fowler
7. Kenny Dalglish
8. Michael Owen
9. Harry Chambers
10. Jack Parkinson

SCANDAL OF 4,000 SLEEPING ROUGH IN THE UK



FRANCES, 21
On streets since mum died last year



MICHAEL, 33
Home for him is tiny one-man tent



JAMES, 31
Slipped through net after losing job

I came looking for a new life... now I live in a tent on Oxford St and it's -2C

THE MIRROR INVESTIGATES

EXCLUSIVE BY TOM PARRY
Special Correspondent

IT'S the coldest night of the winter so far and thousands of homeless people are bedding down on frost-coated pavements.

Opposite the lavish windows of Selfridges on Oxford Street in Central London, 33-year-old Michael pitches his one-man dome tent.

The temperature is -2C but Michael has only a sleeping bag and a thin blanket to keep warm for the next eight hours.

He ties a bag containing his few valuables around his neck in case of muggers and zips up the pitiful tent, too small for his six-foot frame.

In Theresa May's two-tier nation, rough sleepers like Michael are an increasingly common sight. Figures this week showed an average of 4,134 people a night on the streets in England, more than 50% up on the 1,768 two years ago.

CUTS

Since the latest data was collected in the autumn, charities fear even more are sleeping rough because of swingeing cuts to mental health and benefit budgets.

The problem is heavily concentrated in London, which has 23% of the total. Often the homeless gather in the most expensive areas, with scores crashing out in Mayfair, Belgravia and Pimlico.

But it is getting worse away from the capital, too. The survey found 144 people sleeping rough in Brighton, almost double the 2015 figure. There have also been sharp increases in Manchester,

Bristol, Luton, Bedford Cornwall and Birmingham, where a rough sleeper died last month.

Glaswegian Michael, who has been sleeping in the capital since November, says: "I am here from 5pm every night. There are lots of cameras. It's the only place I feel safe."

"I've been mugged twice. I used to tie my valuables around my wrist but someone snipped it off. I used to put up my tent in a park but I got beaten up."

"It is so cold at the moment. I have only one sleeping bag and a blanket I put underneath me to make it more comfortable and stop my muscles seizing up."

"I hate this life but the council say they can't help me. I can't afford a hostel."

"I've been told I have to be on the streets for six months before I can be considered

Mental health issues make it hard for many to break cycle

HOMELESSNESS charity St Mungo's says four in 10 people sleeping rough have a mental health problem.

This makes it harder for them to break the cycle of being in the streets and for them to get access to services they desperately need.

The charity wants the Government to provide mental health assessment and professional support to the homeless. It also wants supported housing to aid people with serious mental health issues in their recovery, rather than them sleeping rough for months.

And the group says another crucial development would be the right support upon discharge from a mental health site, so people don't end up sleeping rough immediately.

Most importantly, it wants changes in the law to stop so many sleeping rough in the first place.

Meanwhile, Crisis believes the Government must work closely with both local authorities and charities to tackle the homelessness problem.

Chief executive Jon Sparkes said: "There is no time to waste. We need the Government to take action and we are ready to work with officials to deliver an ambitious new approach."

Number of people sleeping rough on a single night in October/November last year:

City of Westminster (Central London):	260
Brighton and Hove:	144
Cornwall:	99
Manchester:	78
Luton:	76
Bristol:	74
Croydon (London):	68
Bedford:	59
Birmingham:	55

for temporary accommodation because I have no local connections.

"I'm glad to say there are kind-hearted people who give me food and a hot drink."

"Some shops let me use their socket to power up my phone."

"In the daytime I go to feed a squirrel in Hyde Park and read a book in the library."

"I don't beg because I don't want people to think I'm an addict. I'm a proud man. I won't ask for anything."

Ironically, former factory worker Michael travelled south for better job prospects.

He claims he had to leave Glasgow because he was being hounded by drug gangs on the estate where he lived.

He says he has been offered money to

return but dare not because he would be at risk. He adds: "I've tried to get a job but with no fixed abode no one wants to know about you."

As the night goes on I hear stories similar to Michael's over and over again.

Just over 500 of the rough sleepers in the recent study were women and almost 300 were under 25.

Frances Deacon, 21, fits both categories. She has been homeless since her mum died last year. I meet her under a

railway bridge in trendy Shoreditch, East London, where she begs in the hope of getting enough for a £17 hostel bed.

Frances' gloves and shoes were given to her by passers-by. As she talks – the first proper conversation she has had all day – tears stream down her cheeks.

She explains: "The truth is the council says I'm not a priority because I'm not a drug addict or an alcoholic."

"But I'm 21 and female and by myself. I have to sit out here. I get some benefits

but not enough to cover a hostel so I try to make up the difference somehow."

"I lost my job and my landlord wouldn't accept housing benefit so I lost my flat and I lost my whole life. That was right after my mum died. I have no one to take me in."

"Sleeping rough has opened my eyes. I thought the homeless were all bums who didn't want to help themselves. Now I realise it's so easy to become homeless."

KICKING

"My lowest point came when a group of drunk lads started kicking me. People assume you're a drug addict or low life if you're sleeping rough. I'm not."

"If I don't get enough for a bed I know I won't sleep because I will be too scared of being attacked. I must admit, though, most homeless people are very friendly."

The last time Frances and many other rough sleepers had a proper hot meal was on Christmas Day at an event organ-

ised by homeless charity Crisis. Chief executive Jon Sparkes said: "Our recent research has shown rough sleepers are 17 times more likely to be victims of violence. This is no way for anyone to live."

Many homeless don't want to talk. They lie in subways, heads buried under torn sleeping bags, shut off from the world.

The Government says a quarter of rough sleepers are foreigner but I find only two men – a Syrian man slumped against a doorway and a Romanian.

The reasons for people being stuck outdoors are often similar.

James, 31, slipped through the net after losing his job as a TV engineer. He has had no assistance and both he and his girlfriend sleep rough. He

"I have nowhere to go since mum died. No one will take me in"

ROUGH SLEEPER
FRANCES DEACON, 21

said: "It's easier if you are sick or have a drug habit. Charities are only interested if you have mental health issues or are a danger to the public."

Last night Howard Sinclair, chief executive of homelessness charity St Mungo's, described the new figures as "nothing short of a scandal".

He added: "Rough sleeping is not inevitable. We know that concerted action works." For Michael

that action may come too late. Before the street cleaners are out, he is folding up the tent and stuffing it into his backpack, wondering how to fill the 12 hours until he sets up camp again.

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LOU MACARI, CHAMPION OF THE HOMELESS: FOOTIE PULLOUT P12

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