# London police don superhero costumes to catch scammers



Undercover officers in London employed an unconventional approach to apprehend two alleged scammers, donning superhero costumes in a strategic operation that took place on February 15. Inspector Darren Watson and Police Constable Abdi Osman disguised themselves as Batman and Robin, respectively, to capture the suspects, Eugen Stocia, aged 32, and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu, aged 53, on Westminster Bridge, a known hotspot for scams targeting tourists.

The operation was necessitated by the fact that the faces of the officers had become familiar to the suspects due to previous patrols in the area. Inspector Watson, responsible for neighbourhood policing in the Lambeth North West area, stated, "We know that two repeat offenders have been operating on Westminster Bridge and have come to recognise me and my team from our patrols." Realising the need to adapt their tactics to effectively catch the culprits, Watson recalled the Batman and Robin costumes readily available to him, which ultimately contributed to the success of the mission.

Speaking of the unusual method of apprehension, Inspector Watson remarked, "Although dressing up may not be the most conventional policing method, we were thrilled to see that in this case it worked perfectly and the team were able to get some great results, taking these people off the street and protecting tourists and Londoners from being fleeced."

The scammers were involved in deceptive street games, commonly referred to as the “free cups challenge” or the “shell game,” which are frequently used to defraud unsuspecting tourists. Following their arrest, Barbu was convicted of providing facilities for gambling on February 17 at Croydon Magistrates’ Court and received a fine of £925. Stocia, however, was convicted in absentia of the same offence at Westminster Magistrates’ Court on April 10 after failing to appear, prompting the Metropolitan Police to issue a warrant for his arrest.

This innovative policing strategy highlights the lengths to which law enforcement may go to combat persistent criminal activity in tourist-heavy areas.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.irishexaminer.com/world/arid-41611963.html> - This article supports the claim that undercover police dressed as Batman and Robin to apprehend scammers on Westminster Bridge in London, specifically the involvement of Inspector Darren Watson and Police Constable Abdi Osman in the operation.
* <https://www.irishexaminer.com/world/arid-41611963.html> - It further corroborates the necessity for the unconventional tactic due to recognition by the suspects and the success in capturing Eugen Stocia and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu.
* <https://www.txcourts.gov/media/1457525/texas-rules-of-civil-procedure.pdf> - Although unrelated to the London operation, this link provides information on legal procedures but does not directly support any claims made about the London operation.
* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabra\_(character)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabra_%28character%29) - This article is unrelated to the policing operation in London and instead focuses on the Marvel Comics character Sabra, a superhero from Israel.
* <https://www.co.matagorda.tx.us/upload/page/5703/texas-rules-of-civil-procedure.pdf> - Similar to the Texas Courts link, this PDF provides civil procedure rules in Texas but does not relate to the London story.