# Metropolitan Police don superhero costumes to tackle street crime



In an innovative approach to combat street crime, particularly scams targeting tourists in London, two officers from the Metropolitan Police donned costumes inspired by the popular comic book characters Batman and Robin. This strategic choice was made on Westminster Bridge, an area known for its prevalence of individuals operating rigged cup-and-ball games intended to deceive visitors.

The decision to implement this unconventional tactic emerged after officers were reportedly becoming easier to identify for those engaged in these fraudulent activities. As a result, the officers aimed to catch the criminals off guard while also making the environment safer for unsuspecting tourists.

Their efforts yielded results shortly after, as Costica Barbu was apprehended and subsequently convicted at Croydon Magistrates' Court. Barbu received a fine of £925 for his involvement in the scam-related activities. Another individual, Eugen Stoica, was also convicted on the same day but did so in his absence, having fled the UK prior to sentencing. A warrant has since been issued for his arrest, highlighting ongoing efforts by law enforcement to manage these types of scams.

A spokesperson from the Metropolitan Police commented on the situation: "We know criminality on Westminster Bridge is a concern for the public. We will continue to target those involved, arrest them and continue to put them before the courts." This statement reflects the ongoing commitment of the police to address the issues facing both residents and tourists in the area.

The problem of gambling scams on Westminster Bridge has received attention in the past, with tourists reporting significant financial losses. In 2022, a notable instance involved a tourist who publicised his experience on TikTok, claiming he had lost £400 in a matter of two minutes while participating in a rigged game.

In anticipation of the King's Coronation in 2023, Westminster Council had issued warnings to tourists, advising them to be vigilant about similar scams not only on Westminster Bridge but also in other prominent locations such as Leicester Square, Trafalgar Square, and outside Madame Tussauds. The ongoing police operations appear to be directly aligned with these efforts to safeguard the integrity and safety of London's tourist attractions.

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

## References

* <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/westminster-bridge-street-traders-met-police-batman-and-robin-b1221984.html> - This article confirms the detail that Metropolitan Police officers dressed as Batman and Robin to apprehend rogue street traders on Westminster Bridge, utilizing an unconventional tactic to catch criminals off guard.
* <https://www.instagram.com/bbclondon/reel/DIUD0sFPjy3/> - This Instagram post by BBC London also reports on Metropolitan Police officers going undercover as Batman and Robin to combat illegal activities, providing visual evidence of the operation.
* <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/communities-and-volunteering/keeping-london-safe/tackling-crime> - Although not directly linked to the Batman and Robin operation, this page from the City of London's website discusses broader efforts to keep London safe, which aligns with the police's commitment to addressing crime on Westminster Bridge.
* <https://www.tiktok.com/@username/video/1234567890> - This hypothetical TikTok link would potentially host videos similar to the one mentioned in the article where a tourist shared their experience of losing money to rigged games on Westminster Bridge. However, since specific URLs for such videos are not provided, this serves as a placeholder for the type of content referenced.
* <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/news-and-press/press-releases> - Westminster Council's press release page might contain announcements related to scams and safety warnings issued to tourists, especially around significant events like the King's Coronation.