# Metropolitan Police officers tackle illegal gambling in superhero costumes



Two officers from the Metropolitan Police, Inspector Darren Watson and Police Constable Abdi Osman, gained widespread attention after appearing in superhero costumes to address illegal gambling activities on Westminster Bridge, a significant site frequented by tourists. The pair, dressed as Batman and Robin, took to the iconic location on February 15 in a bid to apprehend individuals involved in a gambling racket known for targeting unsuspecting visitors.

According to the Met Police, the illegal gambling rings often employ games referred to as the 'three cups challenge' or 'shell game', which have been associated with scams aimed at tourists. Inspector Watson noted that the officers were familiar to the repeat offenders that frequented the area. "We know that two repeat offenders have been operating on Westminster Bridge and have come to recognise me and my team from our patrols," he stated.

To effectively counter the illegal activities, Watson sought a creative solution. "I knew that if we were going to catch them we would have to think outside the box, and then I remembered that I had Batman and Robin costumes to hand which could come in use," he elaborated. This innovative approach enabled the officers to carry out their duties while adding an element of surprise.

The operation led to the arrest of Eugen Stoci and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu, alleged participants in the illegal gambling activities. Following the arrest, Barbu was convicted at Croydon Magistrates' Court, resulting in a fine of Rs 1.03 lakh (approximately £925). Stoci, however, was convicted in his absence at Westminster Magistrates' Court, and a warrant has subsequently been issued for his arrest.

Footage capturing the officers in their unique outfits during the arrests has circulated on social media, showcasing the blend of fun and serious law enforcement actions.

This engaging approach to policing is not exclusive to the UK. Recent reports highlight similar initiatives in Brazil, where officers in São Paulo donned Power Rangers costumes during a carnival to arrest a suspected thief. Images of the colourful figures, inspired by the 1990s television series, showcased the officers amidst the festivities while maintaining vigilance against criminal behaviour.

Moreover, Lima's police department also made headlines when an officer conducted a drug raid while dressed in a capybara costume, leading to the recovery of 1,700 packages of illegal substances, including cocaine and marijuana.

Such instances illustrate a growing trend of law enforcement agencies adopting creative methods to engage with the public and combat crime, resonating with communities while tackling serious issues.

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

## References

* <https://news.met.police.uk/news/batman-and-robin-arrest-two-men-on-westminster-bridge-496277> - This URL supports the claim that Metropolitan Police officers dressed as Batman and Robin to tackle illegal gambling on Westminster Bridge. It also details the arrest of Eugen Stocia and Constica-Gherorghe Barbu in connection with providing facilities to gamble.
* <https://www.ndtv.com/feature/cops-dressed-as-batman-and-robin-nab-gambling-suspects-in-uk-video-goes-viral-8152025> - This article confirms the officers' use of Batman and Robin costumes to target an illegal gambling racket on Westminster Bridge. It highlights the creativity used by the police to catch known repeat offenders.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/met-police-westminster-batman-robin-b2732060.html> - This news article corroborates the story of police officers dressing up as Batman and Robin to catch con artists on Westminster Bridge, emphasizing the tactic as a response to familiarity between officers and criminals.
* <https://www.ndtv.com/feature/cops-dressed-as-batman-and-robin-nab-gambling-suspects-in-uk-video-goes-viral-8152025#> - Additionally, this URL provides more details about similar creative policing efforts, including the use of Power Rangers costumes by Brazilian police during a carnival.
* <https://www.ndtv.com/feature/cops-dressed-as-batman-and-robin-nab-gambling-suspects-in-uk-video-goes-viral-8152025> - The article also mentions police in Lima using a capybara costume for a drug raid, illustrating a broader trend of innovative policing methods.