



Wetherspoons bouncer planted hoax bomb in toilet Free 221224

Description



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At a glance

- Stephen Oliphant “found” his fake bomb in the toilets of the pub where he worked
- The Hat and Feathers in Seaham, County Durham, was evacuated in November 2021
- A bingo dabber had been used with other materials to make the device
- The 25-year-old admitted his crime after DNA was found on the items

A pub bouncer who planted a fake bomb in a Wetherspoons toilet so he could “play the hero” has been jailed.

Stephen Oliphant, 25, raised the alarm after telling people he found the device at the Hat and Feathers pub in Seaham, County Durham, in November 2021.

The busy venue was evacuated but an Army bomb squad discovered the device was made from items including a bingo dabber.

Oliphant, of Stanley Street, Houghton-le-Spring, admitted a charge of making a bomb hoax, placing an article with intent, and was jailed for 12 months.

Durham Crown Court heard Oliphant was arrested when police found his DNA on the components of the device, more of which were found when his home was searched.

The scare saw pubgoers – who had gathered on a busy Friday evening – forced to abandon their drinks as the entire street was cordoned off for several hours on 19 November 2021.

Emergency crews including police, firefighters and paramedics attended the scene at about 21:00 GMT, along with the bomb team, who used specialist robots to carry out checks.

Oliphant initially denied any involvement but after being faced with the evidence he admitted planting the hoax bomb so he could look like a hero, Durham Constabulary said.

He pleaded guilty on Friday and was jailed. He was also ordered to pay a £156 victim surcharge.

Det Con Drew Davis, who led the investigation, described Oliphant’s actions as “reckless”.

He said: “Any report of a potential bomb is extremely worrying for the public and this job was very resource intensive with several agencies involved alongside ourselves to make sure no-one came to any harm.”

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