



Laurel Goodman

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## **Dream Idols manager stripped of her freedom after year on the run**

The manager of a well-known male stripping troupe, who was sentenced in her absence for tax and benefit fraud, is behind bars after more than a year on the run.

Laurel Goodman, 57, of Willifield Way, Barnet, NW11, who co-managed the Dream Idols, absconded before being sentenced to 28 months imprisonment in September 2016.

Investigators from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) tracked her to a £1,600-a-month rented house in Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk and arrested her on 1 December 2017. She was living under the alias of Chrissie Tatum and had been running Pet Superstars, a business making films advertising pet supplies, which had a turnover of more than £70,000 in 2016.

Martin Brown, Assistant Director, Fraud Investigation Service, HMRC, said:

“Goodman tried to run but couldn’t hide from our investigators. She chose to abscond before being sentenced for cheating taxpayers and stealing money needed to fund vital public services. Despite moving to a remote location, where she lived under an assumed identity, she was tracked down, arrested and brought before the judge for sentence.

“If you know of anyone who is committing tax fraud, I urge you to report it online or call our Fraud Hotline on 0800 788 887.”

Goodman and business partner Barry Solomons, professionally known as Bari Bacco, 72, failed to declare income of more than £219,000 to HMRC between 2007 and 2013, evading £57,000 in Income Tax.

During the same period, Goodman evaded £114,000 in Income Tax on earnings of £402,000 earned while the duo managed travelling ensemble the Dream Idols.

The fraud was uncovered after a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) investigation revealed Goodman had pocketed almost £5,500, money she would not have received if she had declared her true income.

Goodman was on bail and her case set to be heard at Blackfriars Crown Court on 1 September 2016, but the day before she wrote to her lawyer saying: “I am going somewhere where I am safe and cannot be found.”

Solomons, from Bristol, was given 28 months on 19 September 2016 and has served his sentence. Goodman was sentenced in her absence to 28 months in prison on the same day, and a warrant issued for her arrest. After 458 days on the run, she was traced to Norfolk and arrested in an early morning raid on her home.

Goodman appeared at Blackfriars Crown Court via video-link from HM Prison Peterborough today (5 April, 2018) where she admitted skipping bail and was ordered to serve an extra four months on top of her original sentence.

Her Honour Judge Sullivan said: “This was a serious attempt to evade justice.”

Confiscation proceedings are underway to recover money she stole.

## Notes to Editors

1. Laurel Goodman, formerly of Willifield Way, Hampstead, London, NW11 (DOB 19/09/1960) was sentenced on 5 April 2018 at Blackfriars Crown Court to four months in jail for failing to surrender to bail on 1 and 19 September 2016.
2. Goodman had admitted at Blackfriars Crown Court on 12 July 2016 one count of the fraudulent evasion of Income Tax to the value of £114,632.93, one count of failing to notify the DWP of change in circumstances - that she was working - while in receipt of Income Support, one count of failing to notify the DWP that she was working, while in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance totaling £5,472.90, one count of failing to notify of a change in circumstances - that she was working - that she knew would affect her entitlement to Housing Benefit and one count of failing to notify of a change in circumstances - that she was working - that she knew would affect her entitlement to Council Tax Benefit.
3. Goodman failed to appear at Blackfriars Crown Court on 1 September 2016 for her case to be heard and on 19 September 2016 for sentencing. A warrant was issued and she was arrested on Friday 1 December 2017 at an address in Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, since when she has been in custody.
4. Barry Solomons, of Sussex Place, Bristol (DOB 16/09/1945) admitted one count of the fraudulent evasion of Income Tax to the sum of £57,426.17, two counts of making a false statement on representation on a Pension Credit application form, one count of obtaining Pension Credit payments of £38,584.17 by deception, one count of making a false statement on a Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claim form, one count of

dishonestly obtaining Housing Benefit cheques to the value of £89,780.56, one count of obtaining Housing Benefit payments of £35,412.82 by deception and one count of dishonestly obtaining an exemption of Council tax to the value of £13,296.53. He was sentenced to 28 months in prison on 19 September 2016 at Blackfriars Crown Court.

5. Dream Idols was not subject to this criminal investigation or court proceedings.
6. Anyone with information regarding tax fraud should report it online at: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/dealing-with-hmrc/tax-compliance> or call our hotline on 0800 788 887.
7. Follow HMRC Press Office on Twitter @HMRCpressoffice
8. HMRC's Flickr channel: [www.flickr.com/hmrcgovuk](http://www.flickr.com/hmrcgovuk)

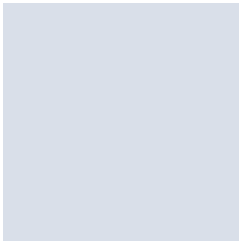
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## Issued by HM Revenue & Customs Press Office

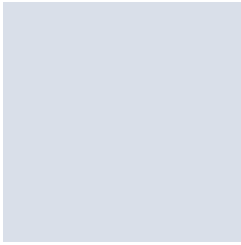
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