

Three and EE sign deal to provide full high-speed mobile access on the Tube

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Two networks have signed up to deliver mobile connectivity services across the [London Underground](#).

[Three](#) and [EE](#) are working with the [BAI Communications \(BAI\)](#) neutral host mobile network to provide 4G and 5G-ready mobile connectivity across the London Underground.

Their collaboration with BAI, which was awarded a 20-year concession with Transport for London (TfL) to deliver mobile connectivity on the Underground, aims to give customers on the networks access to uninterrupted coverage whilst on the Tube and within the stations.

The Tube is one of the world's largest underground networks and providing uninterrupted mobile connectivity will allow customers to check the latest travel information, keep on top of their emails, catch up on social media, live stream videos or make calls wherever they are on the Underground.

This new connectivity will start to be available in 2022. All mobile operators will be able to access the London Underground WiFi, as well as BAI's neutral host mobile network, which can also be made available to the Emergency Services Network (ESN). The infrastructure will also be 5G-ready, allowing for upgrades

in the future.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan said: "I'm delighted to see Three and EE sign up as the first operators to provide full high-speed 4G access across the tube network. This will make a huge difference to passengers, allowing them to make calls, read emails and check travel information while on the move. Investing in London's connectivity and digital infrastructure is one important way we are helping to stimulate our city's economy. It also represents a significant step towards ensuring the whole Tube network has 5G-ready mobile coverage."

Billy D'Arcy, CEO of BAI Communications UK, said: "We're pleased to welcome Three and EE as our launch partners and the first operators who will be transforming customer experience on the London Underground by enabling them to access seamless, 5G-ready connectivity. This is an important next step on the project's journey which will allow passengers to move around the capital more smartly, safely, and securely. More broadly, the new backbone of connectivity will create a platform for innovation and allow London's residents and businesses to harness smart city technology, helping to improve urban life and boost the economy."

Three CEO, Robert Finnegan, said: "Three is delighted to be part of bringing even more connectivity to our customers in London. They will be able to enjoy smooth streaming, phone calls underground and continued seamless coverage while they travel, even in tunnels."

Philip Jansen, chief executive of BT Group, said: "This is huge news for customers and for London, bringing EE's coverage to previously unreachable parts of the city's transport system. This deal puts BT at the heart of plans to help London digitally leapfrog its rivals and maintain its status as a world-leading destination for tourists and businesses, as well as a home to millions of citizens. Our investment in the capital is part of our mission to digitise the entire UK, as we build like fury to expand our fibre and mobile networks further and faster than anyone else."

Shashi Verma, chief technology officer at TfL, said: "It is great that these first two mobile operators have now signed up to provide high-speed, uninterrupted 4G coverage across the London Underground network. Providing mobile connectivity to customers within the tunnels and on platforms across London will help them stay connected more easily and will both provide a long-term revenue stream for TfL and support economic growth across the city."

Dr. Amy Hochadel, director at Connected Places Catapult, said: "Technology offers solutions to many of the challenges that cities face today, and high-speed mobile connectivity is critical to ensuring that innovation can scale up to enable improvements in all aspects of life, from city planning and management to productivity and sustainability. This announcement is such exciting news for London, accelerating its smart city journey and establishing a framework that should be the foundation for all global cities striving to be digitally inclusive and improve the lives of its citizens."

Since BAI was awarded the concession in June 2021, work at some of London's busiest stations, including Oxford Circus, Tottenham Court Road, Bank, Euston and Camden Town, is underway to prepare them to be some of the first to be connected by the end of 2022. All stations and tunnels across the Tube network are due to have high-quality and uninterrupted mobile coverage by the end of 2024.

Progress continues to be made to ensure that customers on the forthcoming Elizabeth line can enjoy mobile connectivity as soon as possible once it has opened in the first half of 2022. Work is now underway to allow 4G connectivity to start being introduced for customers on both the trains and platforms during 2022. From launch, customers will be able to benefit from WiFi connectivity within stations along the line in the same way they currently experience within Tube stations. WiFi access within the tunnels will be introduced later in 2022.

BAI anticipates investing more than £1bn across the Connected London programme, which will see a backbone of mobile and digital connectivity established across London. A full-fibre network will also be delivered that will connect to buildings and street assets, like traffic lights and lampposts that house small mobile transmitter cells to leverage the power of 5G and the Internet of Things. These can then be used by boroughs, academics and developers to deliver improvements in everything from air quality and traffic congestion to public safety and city planning.