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InLinkUK from BT helps people with hearing and speech difficulties communicate using the latest technology

Confidential text relay service now available in major UK cities, via fully accessible InLinks

A new service from BT, which will allow people with hearing and speech difficulties to more easily access the free phone calls provided by the InLinkUK from BT digital street units, has been introduced from today.

BT has worked with its partner, InLinkUK, to make the Next Generation Text (NGT) service available on InLinks across the country, making the service even more accessible to those who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech impaired. InLinks are already installed across 11 London boroughs and 14 other major UK cities, including Leeds, Glasgow, Manchester, Portsmouth and Cardiff.

The confidential Next Generation Text service is unique in the UK. Launched by BT in 2014, it works by letting the caller type the words they wish to communicate, for a Relay Assistant to then speak those words to the recipient of the call. The Relay Assistant types back any responses to the caller, allowing for an effective two-way conversation over the phone.

Users can access the Next Generation Text app via the InLinks' touch screen tablet. This removes the need for users to download the app onto their personal smartphone or tablet themselves, making the NGT service faster and more convenient to use. The new feature allows people with hearing and speech difficulties, to make calls from public street units using an app, for the first time since NGT was launched.

Neil Scoresby, general manager payphones and InLinkUK, BT, said: "With more than 320 InLinks in the heart of city centres across the UK, we're pleased that even more people can make use of the free call service the InLinks offer. We always strive to ensure that BT

products and services enable inclusive communications for everyone and this is a great example. Each week we bring new InLinks to even more towns and cities across the UK, providing a vital lifeline for many, right at the heart of our bustling urban centres.”

Matt Bird, general manager, InLinkUK said: “The InLinks were designed to be accessible for all users, regardless of their physical or technological capabilities. We currently provide braille embossed information on all key features, and we also have hearing induction loops integrated into all of our street units. We are thrilled to introduce the Next Generation Text service to better support members of the public with hearing and speech difficulties – advancing our commitment to enabling digital inclusion throughout the UK.”

The NGT service is now an integrated feature on the InLinks as they continue to be added to city centres across the country.

With more than 320 InLinks already active across the country, more than 230,000 unique Wi-Fi subscribers, and more than 70,000 calls made across the network each week, the InLinks are well used in the communities they serve and this service will be a welcome addition to the current accessibility features already present on the InLinks.

InLinkUK from BT is a partnership between BT and tech start up InLinkUK.

Ends

Enquiries:

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**For InLinkUK: See the media pack (including image library):
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Notes to Editors

About InLinkUK

InLinkUK is a tech start up providing a new communications network that will replace over 1,000 pay phones in major cities across the UK, with new units called InLinks.

Each InLink provides ultrafast, free public wi-fi, phone calls, device charging and a tablet for access to city services, maps and directions, connecting those who visit, live and work in urban hubs across the UK.

Hundreds of users within range of an InLink will be able to access free ultrafast wi-fi on the move, with speeds of up to 1Gbps - the fastest free public wi-fi service available.

InLinkUK from BT is being brought to the UK through a joint venture between Intersection, the urban innovation company behind LinkNYC, and Primesight, a leading UK out-of-home media company, in partnership with BT.

Learn more at <http://www.inlinkuk.com>

BT's wi-fi network in the UK:

BT already operates the biggest network in the UK, giving customers unlimited access to the most extensive wi-fi coverage with more than five million hotspots.

Images:

For images, see [The BT Media Image library](#) and [Telefocus - historical images from BT Archives](#).

About BT

BT's purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world. It is one of the world's leading providers of communications services and solutions, serving customers in 180 countries. Its principal activities include the provision of networked IT services globally; local, national and international telecommunications services to its customers for use at home, at work and on the move; broadband, TV and internet products and services; and converged fixed-mobile products and services. BT consists of four customer-facing units: Consumer, Enterprise, Global Services and Openreach.

For the year ended 31 March 2018, BT Group's reported revenue was £23,723m with reported profit before taxation of £2,616m.

British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group plc and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group. BT Group plc is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York.

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