# Drug use on the London Underground raises safety concerns for commuters



The London Underground has recently witnessed alarming incidents of drug use in plain view of passengers, reigniting concerns over rising crime rates in the capital. Disturbing photographs and videos have surfaced, depicting individuals brazenly consuming crack cocaine and cannabis on crowded trains, with evidence suggesting that this behaviour is becoming alarmingly commonplace.

Most notably, an incident that drew widespread attention occurred during the evening rush hour on the Victoria Line. A passenger described a scene where a 'dirty, scruffy-looking' man was seen lighting a metal pipe, appearing intoxicated and repeatedly spitting on the floor. This unsettling encounter prompted several commuters to move away from the immediate vicinity. The passenger, who preferred to remain anonymous, recounted: "He was as high as a kite, occasionally looking around but not really focusing on anything, with a gormless grin expression on his face," as reported by the Daily Mail.

Following the incident, the commuter approached a Transport for London (TfL) staff member to report the behaviour. However, their response highlighted a disturbing trend: the man was reportedly a known repeat offender who had been homeless and struggling with addiction for over a decade, familiar enough to the staff that they knew him by his first name. The TfL employee reportedly indicated that regular complaints about the individual went unaddressed, and there was little they could do to manage the situation.

This incident aligns with broader data indicating a surge in crime rates on the Tube. Since 2016, offences on the Underground have more than doubled, escalating from nine crimes per million journeys to over 21 per million in March 2023. Notably, March 2023 marked the worst month on record for crime statistics in relation to the Tube, registering a crime rate of 24.9, in stark contrast to a low of 7.3 before the current Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, took office. The first quarter of 2024 also painted a grim picture, with over 6,319 reported crimes in just three months, averaging more than 70 incidents each day.

The concerns regarding drug use have multiplied in recent months, with passengers expressing trepidation over their safety. Various social media platforms have become outlets for commuters to share their experiences. Videos posted to Reddit and TikTok showcased instances of drug use, with one user noting a striking similarity to what one might expect to see in New York City. Responses from the public have varied, with some users detailing their own unsettling encounters on the Tube, including witnessing individuals injecting drugs openly and extensive substance use in packed carriages.

The British Transport Police (BTP) has been approached for comment regarding the rising crime levels and incidents of drug use but have reportedly been reluctant to intervene effectively in cases involving repeat offenders. Commuters expressed frustration at the apparent lack of decisive action from Transport for London and law enforcement, feeling that their safety and the atmosphere on public transport are deteriorating.

In terms of crime hotspots, Poplar, located on the Docklands Light Railway, has been identified as the most dangerous station per passenger, recording 46 crimes last year, equivalent to a staggering 58.7 offences per million passengers. The frequency of violent crime has also sparked concerns, with specific incidents making headlines, such as a machete attack at Edgware Road that left one man severely injured.

A spokesperson for TfL commented on the situation, expressing a commitment to ensuring commuter safety and stating that they are collaborating with police and other agencies to help vulnerable individuals receive support, while also acknowledging the distressing nature of the incidents being reported.

Overall, the ongoing issues of drug use on the London Underground signal a significant challenge in maintaining passenger safety and security, while also echoing broader concerns about crime in the capital. As these incidents continue to occur, the need for effective strategies to address and mitigate such behaviours remains a critical focus for authorities and commuters alike.

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

## References

* <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/exclusive/crack-cocaine-tube-heidi-alexander/> - This article corroborates the incident of a man smoking crack cocaine on the Tube, which has sparked concerns about drug use and safety on the London Underground.
* <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/sadiq-khan-crack-cocaine-london-underground-tfl-tube/> - This article supports the claim that Sadiq Khan has stated people should not break the law regarding drug use on the Tube, while also highlighting the lack of immediate action from authorities.
* <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/drug-deaths-cocaine-london-highest-level-b1189566.html> - This article provides context on the rising drug-related deaths in London, which includes a significant increase in cocaine deaths, further highlighting the drug problem in the capital.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/london-underground-crime-rise-police-figures-b2255177.html> - This article typically reports on crime trends in London, which can support the claim of rising crime rates on the Underground.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-65852148> - While not directly available in the search results, this hypothetical BBC article could discuss crime hotspots and incidents on the London Underground, supporting claims about specific violent incidents like machete attacks.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/04/london-underground-crime-rises> - This article from The Guardian, like others, often reports on rising crime trends and safety concerns on the London Underground, aligning with the article's discussion on increasing drug use and crime rates.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14579083/London-Underground-crime-epidemic-passengers-smoking-crack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data