



Nottingham all set for the launch of Ping!

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Ping! the national ping pong project which places free to play table tennis tables in popular public locations all over England launches its 9th annual festival season this weekend, and Nottingham has been chosen as the flagship location and national launch venue.

The event which takes place this coming Saturday 19th May will see Old Market Square transformed into a table tennis playing arena, complete with ping pong robot and customised novelty tables. Fresh from her Gold Coast Commonwealth medal winning performance Maria Tsapsinos will take on former European Youth champion and local coach Gavin Evans in an exhibition match and will be willing to take on any passers-by who fancy their chances. As it's also Harry and Meghan's special day, in their honour, look out for a game of 'Royal Wedding Round the Table', everyone is welcome to take part. Park Lives and British Triathlon will also be in attendance on the day with some free activities.

The fun starts at 10:30am, it's all completely free and is expected to continue until 4pm.

Keely Armitt, Head of Mass Participation at Table Tennis England spoke of the reasons for selecting Nottingham as the launch venue;

We're delighted to be launching the 9th annual festival season of Ping! in Nottingham. The city has been a fantastic supporter of the project over the years and a hub of table tennis nationally, and it seems fitting for 2018 that Nottingham is our flagship location and national launch venue. Ping! is all about getting people active and having fun by introducing table tennis tables into everyday public spaces, and we hope that the people of Nottingham enjoy using the tables this summer and beyond

Councillor Dave Trimble, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture commented:

We know in Nottingham there is a huge demand for Table Tennis and a desire to play at any given opportunity. It's a great activity you can take part in across the city this summer and it's completely free. Put a table down, and within minutes you've got people playing. People pick up a bat and have a knock at various places from parks to bars and even shopping centres. You don't even need a partner – just challenge a passer-by to a game. I'll certainly be looking for a game or two!

Ping! Nationally

This summer 25 towns and cities all over England are welcoming table tennis tables, providing free to use equipment and encouraging everyone to grab a bat and ball and get playing. The tables will take people by surprise popping up as they do in shopping centres, parks, train stations and iconic locations; creating a delightfully informal, fun and unique experience.

Ping! makes table tennis more accessible by bringing the game into places people already spend time, to inspire them to lead more active, healthy and happy lives. It works, too. There were 1.56 MILLION visits to the tables last year and 2018 promises to be another record-breaking year. By getting the nation enjoying and playing table tennis, the vision is to build a community of participants who continue to play long term.

Two new areas will be hosting *Ping!* this year; South Norfolk and Portsmouth, joining the existing Ping! locations of Barnsley, Blackpool, Bournemouth, Bradford, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Cornwall, Croydon, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Milton Keynes, Newcastle, New Forest, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Poole and Stoke on Trent

While the *Ping!* festival itself only lasts for the summer months, the project is actually the launch pad for long-term change. The tables become a permanent fixture and in constant use in many indoor and outdoor locations for the remainder of the year. Ping pong is fast becoming a big part of the social scene in many communities and workplaces.

More details at www.pingengland.co.uk

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