

Get ready for a summer Ping! extravaganza

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The nation will be going batty again this summer when Ping! – the free street table tennis festival – bounces back for the sixth year running, now in 19 towns, cities and other locations around the country.

The ping pong extravaganza brings table tennis to remarkable and surprising public places nationwide, from The Watering Hole bar on Perranporth Beach, Britain's longest outdoor swimming pool in Cambridge, the National Trust gardens at Tressilick to Game City in Nottingham and more.

The tables pop up in popular thoroughfares and prove just too tempting to resist; to join in the fun, simply grab a bat from the side of the table and play – absolutely free of charge!

A record 19 locations are hosting the Ping! festival this year: Birmingham, Brighton & Hove, Bristol, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Cornwall, Croydon, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Middlesbrough, Milton Keynes, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Sheffield and Tower Hamlets.

Chelmsford, Croydon, Plymouth and Tower Hamlets are joining the initiative for the first time this year. Every participating area will be putting their own unique spin on Ping! as they deliver the project to their local communities.

As well as free play, each ping pong table feature 'Random Acts of Ping Pong', a varied programme of master classes, competitions and free to join activities. The 1,000 tables will remain long after the Ping! festival is over and will be installed in parks and estates on a permanent basis or donated to organisations for the benefit of the community.

Ping! 2015 launches nationally on Saturday June 13, 2015 in the new Ping! city of Plymouth. The amazing launch event will take place on the Armada Way Piazza, right in the heart of the city centre. Under the backdrop of the big screen, a circular bespoke lighthouse inspired ping pong table will take centre stage, with a further 16 tables featuring free play, grudge matches between local councillors, Plymouth Argyle's mascot Pilgrim Pete, local table tennis stars, and organised fun and games.

Councillor Peter Smith, Deputy Leader of Plymouth City Council, said: "It's fantastic that Plymouth has been chosen for the launch of this year's Ping! festival, which will provide a variety of free fun table tennis opportunities over the eight weeks. Table tennis is easy to learn and great for improving mental wellbeing and physical health. Best of all it's fun to play and I'm looking forward to picking up a bat and having a go myself!"

Ping! is the creation of Sing London – the arts organisation whose work aims to lift the public's spirit – and is funded by Sport England who cite it as one of their most successful participation projects, attracting over 1 million participants to date. Ping! is managed and delivered by Table Tennis England in partnership with local authorities and a wide range of creative and cultural organisations.

Visit www.pingengland.co.uk for more information

Julie Snowdon

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