



Ping! back into action this summer

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: June 03, 2015



Welcome to **Around the Table**, our regular look at the work Table Tennis England is doing to promote and support table tennis around the country.

This week our subject is the popular Ping! programme, the 2015 version of which launches this month in a record number of places.

So what is Ping!?

Ping! is the free street table tennis festival which sees tables popping up in remarkable and surprising places nationwide during the summer. Bats and balls are supplied free of charge at each table, so all you need to do is grab a bat and play!

How many cities are involved and how were they chosen?

- Almost one million people have taken part in Ping! since it started in 2010 – 300,000 last year alone!

In 2010 the project was launched solely in London as part of the Sing London project – you may have seen the pianos and ping pong tables at St Pancras Station. It was such a success that it was rolled out nationwide, and this year reaches a record 19 cities and towns.

Any town and city can apply to be a Ping! city, there are no barriers to taking part – just enthusiasm and commitment to the project. To apply to become a Ping! city visit www.pingengland.co.uk/ping-your-city

So where are the 19 towns and cities?

Brighton, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Cornwall, Croydon, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Middlesbrough, Milton Keynes, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Sheffield and Tower Hamlets. Yes, we

know a couple of those are areas rather than cities – it shows Ping! has no limits!

When does Ping! start?

The national Ping! launch this year is in Plymouth on Saturday June 13. Most cities are launching throughout the month of June and all are planning some great launch events; Cambridge launches at the Chesterton festival with the Stilt ladies table tennis players; Leeds has a Sky Ride event; Cornwall will attempt a world record for longest rally with a flip-flop and Brighton are hosting the 4th *Annual Ping! Frying Pan Championships*.

How many people take part every year?

300,000 people took part in Ping! last year alone, bringing the total number of participants since Ping! began to nearly one million people!

Who runs the Ping! project in the individual cities?

Ping! is run in each city by a steering group led by enthusiastic people from local councils, clubs, County Sports Partnerships and community organisations. Volunteers are always welcome – to help run events, coach or mind tables. They can volunteer by contacting their nearest Ping! city via www.pingengland.co.uk/#findatable

How many tables will there be?

1,000 tables, equipped with 10,000 bats and 60,000 balls!

Don't people steal the bats and balls?

Of course a few bats and balls will get broken or disappear but on the whole this doesn't seem to happen, Ping! brings out the very best in people and really creates a community spirit.

What happens to the tables at the end of the summer – and what can I do if I want to play on after Ping! has finished?

The tables all remain in the community long after Ping! is over – some are donated to community projects and some stay in location permanently. There are loads of 'play-on' opportunities out there too, you don't have to join a table tennis club or play competitively to enjoy this wonderful sport. Visit www.pingengland.co.uk/#playon and www.keepintheLOOP.co.uk to find out how you can play socially just for fun.

June 3, 2015

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