

Drinkhall back in Olympic Park three years on

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England No 1 Paul Drinkhall returned to the Olympic Park three years on from London 2012.

He was there to mark the third anniversary of the games with the arrival of two Ping! tables newly installed in the former athletes' village, which is now known as East Village and is home to 5,000 residents.

Olympian Paul battled it out with England Youth Squad member James Smith, 14, and rose to the challenge from members of the public.

Smith is being sponsored by Get Living London, the owner and manager of the privately rented homes at East Village, through SportsAid.

Drinkhall said: "I was delighted to be invited back to East Village to support the launch of the table tennis tables. It is incredible how much the area has developed since I stayed here three years ago during the Olympics.

"I have so many fond memories of my time and I'm thrilled to launch these two new tables to encourage the new residents of East Village to get into the sport."

James Smith, 14, added: "Playing against my biggest idol was a great experience for me. I was 11 years old during the 2012 Olympics and it fuelled my passion for the sport even more.

"It's a great honour to be back at the site of some of the biggest moments in British sporting history – and I loved playing against Paul!"

Neil Young, Chief Executive Officer at Get Living London said: "It has been a pleasure having Paul Drinkhall back at East Village and witnessing the talent of the next generation in James Smith.

"Almost three years on from London 2012 it's fantastic to see more than 5,000 residents living in the former Athletes' Village. The arrival of these Table Tennis tables in East Village coincides with our programme of free summer events and we look forward to seeing people enjoying them throughout the summer and beyond."

The East Village Ping! tables are located in Anthem Way and the north end of Mirabelle Park. They are available free of charge.

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