



# Ping! set to serve up a smashing summer of Ping Pong

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Ping!, the nation's favourite ping pong festival, will be bouncing back onto the streets of a town or city near you this summer for its seventh successive year! Last year, Ping! tables saw nearly 1.3 million visits from members of the general public during the festival (which takes place between June–August) and even more are expected this summer with five new cities signed up to deliver the project.

In total, 21 towns and cities are hosting the ping pong extravaganza in 2016; table tennis tables will be popping up in parks, malls, precincts and piazzas, and in many iconic locations. The Bandstand on Brighton's front; Nottingham Castle; Cambridge's Outdoor Pool and the BBC Television Centre in London, anywhere in fact that the public already enjoy spending time is 'fair game' to the power of Ping!; visit the table finder to find your local hot spot at [www.pingengland.co.uk](http://www.pingengland.co.uk)

The five new cities joining the party this year are; **Manchester, Barnsley, Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle and Bournemouth**, all of whom are hugely enthusiastic about introducing Ping! to their communities, while the legacy Ping! areas, some of which have been delivering the festival since it first started in 2010 include: **Bristol, Brighton, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Croydon, Cornwall, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Milton Keynes, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth and Tower Hamlets.**

**The seaside town of Bournemouth has been chosen to be the venue for the national launch event on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June.**

The Sport England-funded Ping! festival is completely free, no catches, no hidden charges – all you have to do is grab one of the bats and balls provided at the tables, find a willing opponent and get playing! As well as free play there'll be lots of 'Random Acts of Ping Pong' taking place around the tables: King of Ping!, School of Ping, Bling your Bat, Whiff Whaff for the Riff Raff!, picnics, fancy dress, parties – the list goes on; these events will be announced nearer the time, so keep an eye on [www.pingengland.co.uk](http://www.pingengland.co.uk) for more details.

Last year's Ping! festival created some wonderful stories and demonstrated the impact that ping pong can have, bringing the best out in people and connecting communities. In Plymouth, a vacant shop space converted into a 'Ping Pong Parlour' saw a refugee emerge who unveiled himself as the former national coach for Syria. The Ping! team encouraged him to join the Joola Plymouth club coaching team, developing gifted and talented players in the local area. Whilst Cambridge man John Willis, a multiple amputee, had a special prosthetic built to hold a table tennis bat and is taking on a Road2Rio challenge. Some of the most touching

stories of last year came from the elderly participants who once played table tennis and found that visiting the Ping! tables with their grandchildren reignited a passion; many of them continuing to play now in a social setting.

## **2016 – A Summer of Sport**

With the Rio Olympic and Paralympics Games taking place this summer, it is fitting that Ping!, which was born as a London 2012 legacy project, will be able to offer the public a fun sporting activity for all the family to enjoy free of charge!

## **Creating a Ping Pong Scene**

This will be the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Ping! festival; it has grown year on year since its 2010 inception in London and this summer will see a record breaking number of tables, bats and balls across the 21 cities, bringing with them the wonderful community spirit which always plays a vital part of the festival.

The success and longevity of the project is due to the way Ping! creates a lasting legacy wherever it goes. While the festival itself only lasts for the summer months, the Ping! tables are a permanent fixture and in constant use in many indoor and outdoor locations for the remainder of the year. Ping pong is fast becoming part of the social scene in many cities. New ping pong bars, cafes and venues are opening all the time with **Bat and Ball** at Westfield Shopping Centre, Stratford, London the most recent large format venue, with 12 tables to choose from whilst enjoying some food and a drink.

## **Get #INTHELOOP**

Employers are getting in on the action too, recognising that table tennis is an ideal activity to introduce at work; a happy active team makes for a healthy, productive and cohesive workforce. Over 120 of such businesses have already taken advantage of Loop's 'Beat the Boss' packages starting at just £180 and include everything you need to play ping pong at the office; tables, bats, balls, ladder boards and knock out posters.

Amongst the many that love table tennis, those who are already sporty feature heavily so where better to locate a table than in a community sports clubhouse? That's why golf, cricket, hockey, rugby and tennis clubs all over the land are buying Loop tables for their Clubhouses for the benefit of their members. There's nothing like a spot of ping pong to level the playing field...

To find out how you can get your workplace or clubhouse #INTHELOOP visit [www.KeepintheLoop.co.uk](http://www.KeepintheLoop.co.uk)

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