



## Mini Morpeth – an East London Initiative!

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Table Tennis England was pleased to attend JOOLA Morpeth's *Mini Morpeth* session on Saturday. These are free coaching sessions for junior players from an age of 7 provided by several coaches from the community club, with the aim of improving their technical skills in a fun atmosphere. The youngsters emphasized that they enjoyed playing with their friends and that they have developed their abilities in the last few months under the club's tutelage. They proudly demonstrated some drills for the Table Tennis England representative Duncan Jenkinson.

The club, located in Tower Hamlets, London, has had great success in the numbers of juniors attending Mini Morpeth with 21 juniors participating on the previous Saturday. The sessions are also aimed to encourage juniors to come over to the main club from satellite clubs that the club runs across Tower Hamlets at Bethnal Green Academy and Stepney Green School. The club is also launching a further satellite at St Pauls Way School. There were several youngsters on Saturday from Bethnal Green Academy.

Jörg Feist, Administrative Secretary and fund raiser for the club's youth activities explained: '*The entire coaching team is delighted about the increased uptake. This is the result of several activities starting with a Table Tennis festival for young children, several exhibitions at primary schools and, more recently, a few satellite clubs in local secondary schools.*' Parents of the children are encouraged to attend the sessions as well and also to play when possible. They have seen clearly the benefits of Mini Morpeth to the confidence of youngsters taking part and seen how the coaching has helped to improve their skills.

The very modern facilities are part of a secondary school – Morpeth School – with some table tennis heritage and consist of two halls for 16 to 18 high standard competition tables including associated equipment including nets and surrounds. The club provides balls during the sessions. Participants can loan a beginner's bat for no extra charge at the session, too, to encourage children to come who might otherwise not be able come due to

the extra investment. Part of the youth development programme from JOOLA Morpeth is also a junior session on Monday evenings. Two teams were recently formed to compete in the National Cadet League. The entire programme includes three main coaches and two assistant coaches.

*'This success was possible with several funding organisations showing their trust into the club's vision and into the people to realise it.'* Jörg added. *'Tower Hamlets, London Sport, The Canary Wharf Group, the East End Community Foundation and Table Tennis England all have contributed financially to this pioneering programme.'*



Club: JOOLA Morpeth Community Table Tennis Club

Location: Morpeth Secondary School, Tower Hamlets, Morpeth School back entrance, buzzer at gate on Morpeth Street.

When: Saturdays – 2pm to 4pm (Mini Morpeth)

Mondays – 6pm to 7.30pm (Junior)

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