



Ping! festival is back on the streets

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In just a couple of weeks' time it will be GAME ON when the Ping! street festival returns to serve up another fantastic summer of free outdoor ping pong.

This summer's seventh annual festival will boast a record-breaking number of tables, bats and balls bouncing into an unprecedented 21 English towns and cities, bringing with them the wonderful community spirit which always plays a vital part of the festival.

The fun kicks off nationally with a 'Ping Pong Bonanza' on Friday June 10 in Bournemouth. Under the Bournemouth Balloon, a tethered balloon resembling a giant ping pong ball, the Lower Gardens will be populated with ping pong tables providing plenty of opportunities for the public to play for free; get involved in games and competitions, Beat the Champ, exhibition matches and even some ping pong magic!

Ping pong tables will appear in surprising public locations; from parks and shopping centres to iconic landmarks such as Manchester's National Football Museum; the Quayside in Newcastle and Bletchley Park. Anywhere, in fact, that the public already enjoy spending time is 'fair game' to the power of *Ping!*

[Click here](#) to visit the table finder and enter your postcode to find your nearest table.

The festival, funded by Sport England, is completely free to take part in; there are 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!

The aim of the festival is to get the nation active and enjoying playing ping pong, and to build a community of participants who want to continue playing table tennis long after the festival is over.

Five new towns and cities are joining the party this year: Manchester, Barnsley, Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle and Bournemouth. The legacy Ping! areas, some of which have been delivering the festival since it first began, comprise Bristol, Brighton, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Croydon, Cornwall, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Milton Keynes, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth and Tower Hamlets.

Random Acts of Ping Pong

As well as free-play, each city will be holding their own launch party and a series of 'random acts of ping pong' focused around their Ping! tables, including:

Olympic Fanzones

Ping! was born as a London 2012 legacy project, and so it's fitting that for this summer of Olympic Sport we're in on the action again! The Rio Games will be broadcast live each day on large screens at Team GB Olympic Fanzones, some of which will be in our Ping! cities. There will also be heaps of activities and events for you to get involved in, including activity on the Ping! tables – check locally for more information.

Ping! in your High Street

This summer four empty high street retail units in London, Oxford, Poole and Brighton will be transformed into Ping Pong Parlours for people to come, meet-up and play inside for free. So come rain or shine this summer, the people will play! Last year's Parlours created a real buzz with thousands through their doors, many going on to play table tennis regularly.

#TableTennisDay

This year's #TableTennisDay will be on Thursday July 14 in the Ping! city of Brighton. Last year our Ping! cities served up a range of exciting events to mark the day and this summer will be no different. So make a note in your diary and get involved find out more at www.tabletennisengland.co.uk/play/table-tennis-day/

Visit www.pingengland.co.uk/#events for details of events in your area.

Creating a Ping Pong Scene

While the Ping! festival itself only lasts for the summer months, the tables are a permanent fixture and in constant use in many indoor and outdoor locations fast becoming a big part of the social scene in many communities and workplaces.

Ping pong continues to keep its spot in the media too with recent coverage on BBC1's *How to Stay Young* with Angela Rippon examining the benefits of table tennis as exercise for the brain; and The Times and BBC Breakfast recently talking about how ping pong has put a new spin on the health of the economy with many businesses providing tables for their employees.

Get #INTHELOOP

Table Tennis England, the sport's national governing body, has recognised this trend toward social ping pong and the many benefits it can bring with its suite of 'Loop' products.

Loop brings social table tennis to everyday spaces, such as workplaces, clubhouses, university campuses, bars and cafes and other community groups. More than 160 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 knockout posters.

To find out how you can get your workplace, clubhouse, campus or community #INTHELOOP; visit www.KeepintheLoop.co.uk

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