



Community groups are Streets ahead after table donation

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Posted On: September 12, 2016

The tables used in the I Am Team GB extravaganza at Coronation Street will help hundreds of people from all walks of life get active through table tennis.

ITV has donated the eight tables to four community organisations in Manchester, where they will benefit youngsters, older people, homeless people and those with disabilities.

Trinity House Community Resource Centre, The Church of the Apostles, St Cuthbert's Church and Heathlands Village care home have received tables through the scheme funded by ITV and Sport England and co-ordinated by Table Tennis England.

Trinity House Community Resource Centre in Rusholme runs projects ranging from youth clubs and after-school clubs to activities for over-50s and people with disabilities.

The charity's Operations Manager Lydia Anthony said: "When I got the email to say we were getting two tables from Coronation Street, I was really, really pleased. It's really exciting for the organisation.

"The building has just been refurbished and it's a great addition to what's happening here – we're really going to utilise the tables.

"I think a lot of people don't think of it as an active game, but it is, and we're hoping we'll encourage more people to come in and get more active.

"Quite a few of the staff are keen as well!"

Heathlands Village, based in Prestwich, received three brand new table tennis tables for residents and staff to enjoy.

The tables were delivered this week by former British No 1 and Olympian Andrea Holt, who is Table Tennis England's Development Officer in the north.

Weekly table tennis sessions, supervised by staff, are planned for residents, along with a staff competition further down the line!

For now, along with bats and balls, the tables will be accessible to those visiting Heathlands Village, including families of residents and children. This in turn will provide an excellent activity for younger visitors whilst their parents are visiting with residents.

Lucy Edwards, who has been behind much of the project, said: "Research has shown that table tennis can be highly beneficial for anyone living with dementia. The sport can help to reduce cognitive decline, as well as improving long-term memory for those with dementia."

The two churches are in the deprived area of Miles Platting and the tables will be used by members of an over-55s group, weekly youth group, Guides, Brownies, Rainbows and Church Lads and Church Girls brigades.

Both church halls will be hosting a winter night shelter from October to March and table tennis will be offered for socialising.

Rev Ellie Trimble said the tables would also be used every Sunday at a meal for the homeless, which is attended by up to 70 people.

She added: "We are so grateful for the donation of four table tennis tables and all the kit to go with them as we are small churches with few resources but amazing links to our community and a real heart to serve our people!

"The gift of the tables has already made a difference to the lives of members of our community and there has been much fun and laughter. We really do want to make the most of this gift and have a vision to join a local league in the future maybe with our homeless guests and older people."



One of the tables in use at the over-50s coffee morning

I Am Team GB, billed as Britain's biggest sports day, was organised by ITV and the National Lottery to give people inspired by the Olympics the chance to have a go at many of the sports which featured in Rio, and as a thank you to those who contributed to the success of Team GB by playing the National Lottery, which helps to fund elite sport.

An ITV spokesman said: "I Am Team GB, the Nation's Biggest Sports Day was a really special day. It was a great to see Coronation Street stars, Olympic heroes and the local community all having fun together on the bank holiday and trying out new sports, including table tennis.

"We're really delighted that people will still be able to participate in table tennis following the sports day. It's such a terrific sport."

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