



## Join us in Blackpool for the Ping! launch

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**Posted On:** [June 08, 2017](#)

Ping! is back and bigger than ever, with no fewer than 24 towns and cities set to make it a great eighth year of the annual extravaganza.

Bradford, Blackpool, Poole and the New Forest have joined the Ping! family this year, giving even more people the opportunity to pick up a bat and have a game of table tennis in a variety of public spaces.

They add to the 20 Ping! legacy areas, which are: Barnsley, Bournemouth, Bristol, Brighton, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Croydon, Cornwall, Exeter, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth and Stoke-on-Trent.

Blackpool has been chosen to host the launch of Ping! 2017, which will take place next Wednesday, June 14th.

With the famous Tower as a stunning backdrop, St Johns Square will come alive with a multitude of balls, bats and tables providing an opportunity for everyone to come and play. Entertaining the crowds will be BGT finalist Thomas Bounce, who will be attempting to juggle table tennis bats, and a ukulele orchestra. Current England player Karina LeFevre will take on Olympian Andrea Holt in an exhibition match.

**Cllr Maria Kirkland, Cabinet Member for Leisure Services at Blackpool Council, said:**

“This initiative has been very successful in other parts of the country and we are looking forward to see it come to Blackpool.

“We are hoping that the tennis tables will appeal to both residents and visitors alike, and encourage the community to become more involved in fun and free activities.

“Table tennis is the most popular racquet sport in the world and we are hoping to capitalise on this in Blackpool. It’s very easy to play so we are hoping to see lots of people getting involved.”

The project's aim is to make table tennis accessible to everyone by bringing the game into places people already spend time. By getting the nation active, enjoying and playing table tennis, the vision is to build a community of participants who continue to play long after the festival is over.

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