



Ping! 2017 launches in spectacular style

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A gloriously sunny day saw hundreds of people, from school children to the elderly, take to the tables and have fun at the National Launch of Ping! 2017 .

Blackpool played host to the event and with the famous Tower and Winter Gardens setting the scene. St Johns Square was awash with table tennis balls, bats, activity and laughter.

Highlights of the day included:

- England players Karina Le Fevre and Gavin Evans displaying their skills with exhibition matches and gamely taking on members of the public
- Challenge the robot
- Britain's Got Talent finalist Thomas Bounce entertaining the crowds with his juggling expertise including table tennis bats!
- Whiff Whaff where books become bats
- Bucket and Spade challenge

We were absolutely thrilled and honoured to have Jill Parker MBE attending our launch (and very gamely taking on the robot!). One of our most prominent and successful female players ever, Jill is also the Table Tennis England President. In her playing career Jill reached No 1 in England (for many years) and also became European No 1 and 6 in the world.

Our other special guests attending included the Mayor of Blackpool; John Blackledge, Director for Community & Environmental Services, Blackpool Council; and Wendy Swift, Chief Executive of Blackpool NHS Foundation Trust.



Click to view all the photos from the day

Emily St John, Head of Mass Participation at Table Tennis England, said:

“We were absolutely delighted that so many people attended the launch and hope this is the start of a fantastic summer of ping pong in Blackpool”

“Huge thanks to Lee Boyer [Sports Development Manager] and his team at Blackpool Council for hosting the national launch event and their efforts in making the day a resounding success”.

“We’re looking forward to a summer of fun and hope that you are too!”

The event was the launchpad for the 8th annual summer Ping! festival and the first time for Blackpool, which joins 23 towns and cities all over England placing table tennis tables in public places encouraging people to pick up a bat and play on for free.

At the end of the summer the tables will continue to be used and enjoyed by all, by keeping them in situ or donating into the community for the benefit of groups of people who would not otherwise have access to social table tennis.

To find your nearest Ping! table visit www.pingengland.co.uk/#findatable

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