



Congratulations to Ping! Personality winner Peter

Author: Paul Stimpson

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There's an army of volunteers all over the country giving their time freely and willingly to support their local Ping! festival, and without their help, Ping! would not be the success it is.

They invest a huge amount of their spare time, enthusiasm, energy and emotion into helping to 'mind' tables, running events and competitions, coaching or simply inspiring passers-by to pick up a bat and have a go.

To acknowledge the invaluable contribution these volunteers make, in 2015 the Ping! Personality of the Year Award was born, which has since become part of the 'Pride of Table Tennis' Award Scheme.

Six nominations were received this year from Croydon, Plymouth, Nottingham, Liverpool, Stoke and Leeds/Bradford. Read about the shortlisted nominees [here](#)

It was a tough decision for the judges as all the nominees made a fantastic contribution to the Ping! festival in their location, but by unanimous decision the winner was announced yesterday as Peter Thompson.

Peter was nominated by Ping! Leeds and Ping! Bradford for his work with both cities. Although Peter is employed as a part-time Ping! activator, he goes above and beyond his job role, delivering the project in these cities, giving loads of his own time freely, willingly and enthusiastically.



Peter with his award

Sally Shutt, Development & Volunteering Officer for Table Tennis England North, said of his impact on the local communities:

Peter's infectious enthusiasm for the sport and very personable manner cannot fail to attract people to try 'the greatest sport on earth', as he refers to table tennis.

Peter delivers Ping! sessions all over Bradford and Leeds using his excellent communication skills to great effect, breaking down barriers with some of the most difficult to engage groups. A perfect example of this was at Leeds City College where staff cited that due to Peter's enthusiasm and coaching over 260 usually inactive students had joined the Table Tennis Club.

He has also been well received at new sessions with an ethnic girls group at Moor Allerton Library and a men's mental health group at The Compton Centre where staff have given positive feedback on his outstanding empathy and positive manner.

Peter has also recently brought Ping! into a programme run by Shipley College that aims to help people with disabilities or learning difficulties to find and sustain a job.

He's a fantastic ambassador for Ping! throwing himself with such enthusiasm into everything he does, whether it's coaching, exploring the world of social media or asking participants to complete surveys, I only wish we could clone 'Ping Pong Pete' as we could do with many more of him!

Mark Taffler, head of the Mass Participation team at Table Tennis England, responsible for the delivery of the Ping! project, added:

Many congratulations to Peter and to the other nominees, and a huge vote of thanks to the army of 254 Ping! volunteers all over the country, their efforts are very much appreciated and they help make Ping! the wonderful community project that it is.

Peter will be a VIP guest of honour at the PG Mutual National Championships in March 2018, where he will be presented with his award together with all the national winners of Table Tennis England's Pride of Table Tennis awards.

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