

## Farnham Museum repairs hitting £2M

6 June 2025



The cost of repairing “one of the most important buildings in Surrey” has ballooned to nearly £2 million after further setbacks were discovered – with Waverley Borough Council now on the hook for about three quarters of a million pounds.

The Grade 1 listed Farnham Museum has been protected due to the exceptional interest in its rare design. Its listing places it alongside some of the nation’s most famous landmarks including Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court and the Cenotaph.

In March 2023, funding for the project was secured after the Arts Council gave Waverley Borough Council a grant of £734,335 for essential repairs to its Wilmer House, Georgian home, in West Street.

The council-owned building had fallen into disrepair with the cash used to address decaying brickwork, its collapsing second floor window arches, and deeply eroded mortar joints.

Further exploratory work uncovered a wrath on additional problems with the budget growing ever since. Senior councillors has described the work as vital to protecting the “extremely valuable building” and that describing its worth in monetary terms “felt a little grubby”.

Following the Tuesday, June 3, meeting of Waverley Borough Council, which agreed to set aside an additional £243,000 for the project, the total cost is expected to be £1,720,000 – of which £735,000 will be funded by the council.

Councillor Kika Mirylees, portfolio holder for community services and leisure said: “Wilmer House is a grade one listed building and is extremely rare being one of fewer than 20 buildings of its type..

“As a grade one listed building it sits alongside other somewhat more famous buildings such as Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court, the Tower of London and the Cenotaph. However, as we know, the challenges that come with a grade 1 listed building are not easy.”

She added: “The first phase was always going to be one of uncertainty, we knew that, until the scaffolding came down and we saw what was lying behind it. The extra funding we need will be for the parapet wall and the two chimneys, which will make up the majority of the extra funding because we can not leave them as they are.

“Their deterioration is much greater than expected and they were not part of the tendered contract. “Like it or not Waverley has a statutory obligation to carry out the repair work in a timely manner due to planning law and health and safety concerns – and the funding given to us by the Arts Council.”

It is expected that the work will take about 18 weeks to complete and will be finished by mid October, the meeting heard. Any delay would have a knock on effect and push the project into the next year, resulting in a third consecutive winter shut down and costing a further £69,000.

Cllr Mark Merryweather, portfolio holder for finance, assets and property added: “When you go up there and have an expert explain to you the history of the building, the skill that went into the original works there, it almost feels slightly grubby to start monetising it, because it is an extremely valuable building.

“But having said that we have to, we are a council, we have a responsibility – not only to our taxpayers, but to Farnham and the borough, and to the nation because this is a nationally important building.

“In our stewardship and custody I am confident its going to be looked after the way it should. Its disappointing we’ve found more work that needs to be doing but no one can say we weren’t fully aware of the risk.”

Museum of Farnham JT initials (Image Google)

## 23 Epsom Dads take on Welsh mountains for charities

6 June 2025



A group of 23 dads in their 40s and 50s from the Epsom area will take on their 2025 hike – the ‘Carneddau to Coast’ challenge across the rugged mountains of North Wales.

The Epsom Trailblazers are back for their fifth charity hike. On 14th June, the group will tackle 11 peaks, 30km and 1,700m of ascent in one day, all in aid of two amazing charities.

Established in 2016, the Trailblazers’ charity hikes have raised over £55,000 in recent years, and this year’s target is a massive £10,000 for their chosen charities – one local (Queen Elizabeth’s Foundation for Disabled People) and one national (The Brain Tumour Charity).

The bi-annual walking challenges plus many months of training routines have helped the Trailblazers become great friends as well as shaking off some excess kilos in the process.

According to four-times Trailblazer John Croome: “The Trailblazers have all been training really hard this year, hiking endless repeats of the Box Hill ascent every weekend in preparation for the Carneddau challenge and getting in shape any way we can.

“We think we are ready, and are really looking forward to the hike to raise much-needed funds for these great charities.”

The Brain Tumour Charity is the largest dedicated funder of research into brain tumours globally, and has a special connection to the group, with a best friend of a Trailblazer currently undergoing treatment for a brain tumour. Supporting their work will help to save and improve the lives of everyone affected by a brain tumour.

The Trailblazers have also chosen to support the Queen Elizabeth’s Foundation for Disabled People as their local charity this year – the Surrey-based charity supports disabled people of all ages to maximise their independence and achieve their potential. Again, the group has a personal link with the charity with one of the Trailblazers working hard at the charity every day.

Firzana Khan, Community Fundraiser for The Brain Tumour Charity, said: “We’re incredibly grateful to the Epsom Trailblazers for choosing to support The Brain Tumour Charity on their epic Carneddau to Coast challenge.

“Their determination, camaraderie and generosity are truly inspiring, especially as they walk in support of a close friend affected by a brain tumour. Every step they take helps us move closer to our goal of doubling survival and halving the harm that brain tumours cause. We’re cheering them on every inch of the way!”

The Trailblazers 2025 challenge: <https://www.givewheel.com/fundraising/8095/trailblazers-2025-carneddau-to-coast/>

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## Today is World No Smoking Day - Surrey steps up

6 June 2025



Surrey unveils inspiring stop smoking stories: boosts free support and offers exclusive app access

This Saturday 31st May is World No Smoking Day and Surrey County Council is stepping up its mission to help residents quit smoking with the launch of a compelling new series of video case studies, a significant funding boost, and free access to the popular Smoke Free App.

The video case studies, produced in partnership with One You Surrey, feature Tara and Tobias who have successfully quit smoking. These powerful testimonials aim to inspire others to take the first step toward a healthier, smoke-free life. Watch the videos below:

This initiative is backed by new government funding, part of a national drive to create a Smokefree Generation. The additional resources will allow residents to have even more choice when finding the right free, personalised support to quit smoking.

One You Surrey is the healthy lifestyle service for Surrey residents including a comprehensive stop smoking programme, which includes FREE:

One-to-one support with trained mentors

Nicotine replacement therapies and e-cigarettes delivered to your door

The choice of telephone or face-to-face weekly appointments. See where your nearest location is via: [How can I quit smoking? | Healthy Surrey](#)

New Digital Support: Free Access to the Smoke Free App

Surrey residents can now access six months of free premium features on the highly rated Smoke Free App, offering residents 24/7 support to help you when your cravings hit. Plus, you will receive up to 12 weeks supply of free first choice stop smoking aids, including patches, chewing gum, e-cigarettes and more. The app offers:

Daily missions and motivational messages

Progress tracking (money saved, health improvements)

Craving management tools

Access to expert advice and community support

To activate your free subscription, visit: [smoke free app](#)

Whether it’s your first time trying to quit, or you’ve tried before, it’s never too late to ditch the cigarettes.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing and Public Health said: “As an ex-smoker, I know it’s not easy to quit on your own, so I am proud that Surrey County Council is offering even more tools to help people quit smoking. With inspiring local stories, expert support, and now a free app, there’s never been a better time to go smoke-free.”

To start your journey, visit [oneyoursurrey.org.uk](https://oneyoursurrey.org.uk).

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## Epsom and Ewell Summer Festival at Bourne Hall

6 June 2025



Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is pleased to announce that Bourne Hall will host a Summer Festival on Saturday, 14 June 2025 from 11am until 6pm.

The free event promises fun for all the family, with live music, children’s entertainment, food and craft stalls and games.

Throughout the day, the main stage will host a variety of live music performances, featuring talented local artists and bands. Enjoy a diverse range of musical genres that will keep you entertained and dancing all day long with a DJ host.

Browse the market to discover a range of unique treasures from local craft and artisan sellers, as well as delicious food and drink. The Flying Saucer Café will also be open from 9am until 6pm, offering a range of tasty treats and refreshments.

In addition to this, local community sports group, NEAT, will be hosting a variety of children’s games and activities. Their fun and interactive setups are sure to be a hit with kids of all ages!



Anyone bringing children to the event might be interested in the Ultimate Fun Party –a pre-bookable event from 11am until 12.30pm. Children will be amazed by the tricks of a talented entertainer, while the large disco will have everyone moving and grooving plus there’ll be crazy bubbles and foam! The Ultimate Fun Party is aimed at children aged 5 to 11 and costs £10. It can be booked on the Bourne Hall website.

Cllr Clive Woodbridge, Chair of the council’s Community and Wellbeing Committee, said,

“Bourne Hall provides such a valuable community space, and I’m pleased to see their festival return for another year.

“This year there is a huge focus on opportunities for children to play and have fun, and for families to spend quality time together. The Ultimate Fun Party, along with games by NEAT, live music and a variety of food vendors are sure to be a hit – I can’t wait to see all of this in action!”

The Bourne Hall festival is annual event with a different theme each year. Previous iterations have included Sustainability, The Herald of Spring and New Beginnings. This year’s festival will run from 11am to 6pm.

Bourne Hall’s address is Spring Street, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 1UF.

[www.bournehall.org](http://www.bournehall.org)

Live Music: 13:00 – 18:00

Enjoy a diverse range of musical genres that will keep you entertained and dancing all day long with a DJ host.

Ultimate Fun Party: 11:00 – 12:30

A fun party aimed at children aged 5 – 11 years.

Tickets cost £10 each and include admission for one child and one adult.

Adult supervision is not required throughout the party; however, adults must stay on the premises for the duration of the event. Book via Bourne’s Hall website: [www.bournehall.org](http://www.bournehall.org)

Children’s Games and Activities: 12:00 – 18:00

Local community sports group, NEAT, will be hosting a variety of children’s games and activities. Their fun and interactive setups are sure to be a hit with kids of all ages.

The seeds of NEAT (New Era Academy Training) were planted when Ben and Grant met as youth coaches at Chelsea FC. Both shared a love for football and a dream of passing on their skills to the next generation. You can learn more about NEAT here: <https://weareneat.co.uk/>

Market Stalls: 12:00 – 18:00

Explore a vibrant array of market stalls showcasing local crafts, products, and more. It’s the perfect opportunity to support local businesses and find unique treasures.

Food Stalls: The Flying Saucer Café 09:00 – 18:00, Food stalls 12:00 – 18:00

A selection of food stalls will be available, offering a range of tasty treats and refreshments.

## Epsom and Ewell Borough Council out - Community Council’s in?

6 June 2025



Earlier this month, at a meeting of the full Council, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) agreed new strategic priorities for 2025-2027, with the number one priority being to explore future local governance in Epsom & Ewell. This week, Councillors will attend a briefing on Community Governance Review (CGR) and will, with the Mayor’s agreement, schedule an extraordinary full Council meeting on Thursday 26 June 2025. At the extraordinary Council meeting, Councillors would agree whether to commence with a CGR in Epsom & Ewell, that could eventually lead to the creation of new community councils.

Community councils provide a vital link between residents and larger unitary authorities, which will be critical as a result of imminent local government reorganisation in Surrey. They aim to enhance local representation by providing a direct route for the essential voices of residents and local communities, ensuring that residents are aware of local issues, and are involved in decision-making they are affected by.

Councillor Hannah Dalton, Leader of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, said “We are navigating the biggest change in local democracy for more than 50 years. As a priority we are working to ensure that, whatever the outcome of local government reorganisation, the voices of our residents and local communities continue to be heard in years to come – this is a vital element of local democracy. We will keep residents informed and updated throughout this process.”

In the coming days, Councillors will be briefed on the CGR process and possible geographies for establishing community councils in Epsom & Ewell:

Should full Council decide to commence with the CGR, the process will include a public consultation which would take place summer 2025, with any final proposal being consulted on in early 2026.

EEBC council meetings, including extraordinary full Council meetings, are open to the public to observe and are also live streamed: details on how to watch meetings can be found on the council’s website: [Epsom and Ewell Democracy](http://Epsom and Ewell Democracy)

In light of the plans for local government reorganisation, which will see the formation of new unitary councils and the dissolution of all current district, borough and county councils in Surrey; EEBC approved an amendment to the Council’s Four-Year Plan earlier this month, replacing it with strategic priorities for 2025-2027. Prior to the 9 May final submission deadline, Epsom & Ewell with nine of the eleven Surrey district and borough councils submitted a proposal to government to create three unitary councils in north, east and west Surrey. The county council and two other district and borough councils favour a two unitary model. Council leaders ruled out the creation of one unitary council for Surrey in February this year.

## Run for humanity in Epsom and Ewell

6 June 2025



On Sunday, 18th May 2025, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) in the Southwest Region of England hosted a remarkable charity run that brought

together people from across the local community in a spirited show of unity and compassion.

Held at Auriol Park, a public park in the Borough of Epsom and Ewell, the event ran from 10 AM to 2 PM and served as a vibrant platform for both raising funds and awareness. With over £8,000 collected on the day, the event was a resounding success. All proceeds went to AMYA's partner charity, *Humanity First*.

*Humanity First*, established in 1995 and registered with the UK Charities Commission, operates in 66 countries across six continents. It runs eight core programmes that have collectively transformed millions of lives through disaster relief efforts, sustainable development, and community empowerment. The funds raised through this event will directly support the charity's response to various crises around the world, including the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza.

Participants came from across the region, with residents of Kingston, Worcester Park, Tolworth, Malden Manor, New Malden, Surbiton, Epsom and Ewell all playing their part in contributing to this noble cause.

The day began with a competitive 10K run that set the tone for the rest of the event, as runners, supporters, and volunteers came together with a shared purpose. Alongside the run, attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including inflatable attractions, food stalls, and exhibitions that added a festive and welcoming atmosphere for families and supporters alike.

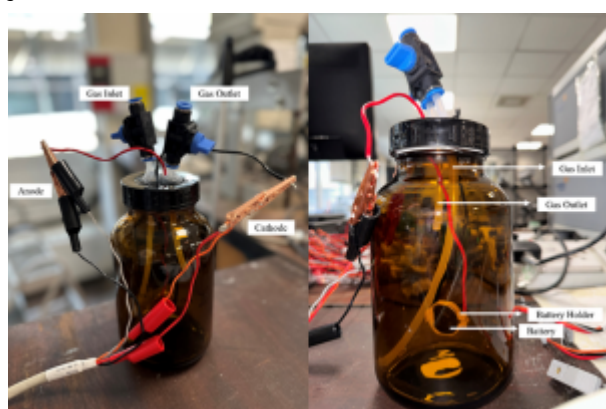
Beyond the fundraising, the event provided an invaluable opportunity for the public to learn more about the Islamic principle of serving humanity. In Islam, service to others is not just encouraged — it is considered a vital part of one's faith and spiritual fulfilment.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association, known for its strong emphasis on community welfare and interfaith cooperation, exemplifies this teaching by actively engaging in charitable activities across the UK and internationally. By organising such events, AMYA not only raises funds for critical humanitarian efforts but also helps foster mutual understanding and a sense of shared responsibility within the wider community.

Faran Shaheen  
Regional Press Secretary for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA) UK

## Surrey battery leads

6 June 2025



Scientists at the University of Surrey have made a breakthrough in eco-friendly batteries that not only store more energy but could also help tackle greenhouse gas emissions. Lithium-CO<sub>2</sub> 'breathing' batteries release power while capturing carbon dioxide, offering a greener alternative that may one day outperform today's lithium-ion batteries.

Until now, Lithium-CO<sub>2</sub> batteries have faced setbacks in efficiency – wearing out quickly, failing to recharge and relying on expensive rare materials such as platinum. However, researchers from Surrey have found a way to overcome these issues by using a low-cost catalyst called caesium phosphomolybdate (CPM). Using computer modelling and lab experiments, tests showed this simple change allowed the battery to store significantly more energy, charge with far less power and run for over 100 cycles.

The study, published in *Advanced Science*, marks a promising step toward real-world applications. If commercialised, these batteries could help cut emissions from vehicles and industrial sources – and scientists even imagine they could operate on Mars, where the atmosphere is 95% CO<sub>2</sub>.

Dr Siddharth Gadkari, Lecturer in Chemical Process Engineering at the University of Surrey, and corresponding author of the study, said:

"There's a growing need for energy storage solutions that support our push toward renewable power while also tackling the growing threat of climate change. Our work on lithium-CO<sub>2</sub> batteries is a potential game-changer in making that vision a reality.

"One of the biggest challenges with these batteries is something called 'overpotential' – the extra energy needed to get the reaction going. You can think of it like cycling uphill before you can coast. What we've shown is that CPM flattens that hill, meaning the battery loses far less energy during each charge and discharge."

To understand why the CPM worked so well, teams from Surrey's School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering and the Advanced Technology Institute used two approaches. First, they dismantled the battery after charging and discharging to study the chemical changes inside. These post-mortem tests found that lithium carbonate, the compound formed when the battery absorbs CO<sub>2</sub>, could be reliably built up and removed – an essential feature for long-term use.

They then turned to computer modelling using density functional theory (DFT), which allows researchers to explore how the reactions unfold on the material surface. Results showed how the CPM's stable, porous structure offered the ideal surface for key chemical reactions.

Dr Daniel Commandeur, Future Fellow at the University of Surrey and corresponding author of the study, said:

"What's exciting about this discovery is that it combines strong performance with simplicity. We've shown that it's possible to build efficient lithium-CO<sub>2</sub> batteries using affordable, scalable materials – no rare metals required. Our findings also open the door to designing even better catalysts in the future."

The discovery opens new doors for developing even better low-cost, easy-to-make battery materials. With further research into how these catalysts interact with electrodes and electrolytes, lithium-CO<sub>2</sub> batteries could become a practical, scalable way to store clean energy, while helping reduce carbon in the atmosphere.

## Cleanliness is next to Godliness in Epsom

6 June 2025



On Sunday, 4th May, the sun was shining — and so were the smiles of Councillors Steven McCormick (RA Woodcote and Langley) and James Lawrence (LibDem College). While Steven knew what to expect having joined the group several times before, James was astonished to be greeted by a 110-strong team of volunteers, all equipped with litter pickers, high-vis jackets, and green and grey litter bags (more on those later), gathered and ready in Rosebery Park.

The volunteers, from ASEZ WAO and the World Mission Society Church of God, had travelled from Surrey, London, and as far afield as Manchester, Guildford, and



Birmingham. Their mission: to clean up the parks and streets of Epsom as part of a “Reduce Plastic” campaign — an initiative backed not just by words, but by real action.

The event began with inspiring words from the councillors. Councillor James expressed his surprise at the turnout, admitting he had expected a group of around 11 but was delighted to see 10 times that number. “This is wonderful — amazing,” he said. “It’s so pleasing to see so many young faces in the crowd... so many people think activism is just shouting something online, but it’s fantastic to see people actually doing something.”

Councillor Steven added: “Hopefully people will just put litter in the bin — I know it’s a big ask — but what you’re doing is great and sets a really good example. You don’t just explain it, you actually do it. Really good job.”

Although Councillor Neil Dallen (RA Town) was unable to attend in person, he sent a message of encouragement via email, which was read out by a representative: “Best wishes to you all. This country depends on volunteers in many ways. A clean and tidy town encourages others to keep it clean and discourages littering and graffiti.”

The mostly young adult volunteers were uplifted by the councillors’ support, giving them a resounding cheer and calling out, “We love you!” Following the speeches, a short presentation was given on plastic pollution, highlighting the dangers of microplastics and encouraging people to think about how they can reduce plastic in their daily lives — something we can all take part in.

Afterwards, the councillors and volunteers set to work along three key routes in Epsom, including the town centre, the car park near Lidl, Epsom Square, Rosebery Park, and Mount Hill Gardens — all areas where litter had been reported. Recyclable and non-recyclable waste were carefully separated, with recyclable items placed in green bags and non-recyclable in grey ones.

Members of the local community praised the volunteers, and several even signed up for future events. Other environmental groups also offered words of encouragement, recognising the volunteers’ hard work. By the end of the day, about 40 bags of rubbish had been collected and left at an agreed pick-up point, where they were retrieved by a ranger from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council (EEBC) and taken to the recycling depot. The EEBC depot had kindly supported the volunteers by providing around 30 litter-picking kits, which proved invaluable.

The day stood as a shining example of successful collaboration between community volunteers, councillors, and council staff. More activities are already being planned by ASEZ WAO, based at the World Mission Society Church of God on East Street, in partnership with Councillors Steven and James. These include further plastic awareness events, potential upcycling initiatives, and of course, more litter picks.

Epsom was recently ranked the second-best place to live in England, and the volunteers are hopeful that, with continued community effort, it will claim the top spot next year. They are committed to working alongside the community and the council to inspire civic pride, keep our streets clean, and make our local area a pleasant place for everyone. As Councillor Neil noted, by setting a good example, we hope others will be inspired to keep Epsom clean and discourage littering and graffiti.

Olivia from ASEZ WAO summed up the spirit of the day, saying, “The event was brilliant — I loved it. I really hope it makes a difference, and if you have the time, I’d definitely recommend getting involved in something like this.”

Joe Adams

## Epsom man awarded for psychosis interventions

6 June 2025



A Peer Support Volunteer based in Epsom has won a Gold Award at the annual Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Staff Awards for his extraordinary contribution to the Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIIP) team, which previously supported him.

David Laycock received the Award for a Person with Lived Experience, recognising his remarkable impact on the EIIP team for East Surrey, which supports individuals aged 14-65 who have experienced psychosis. Drawing from his own lived experience of the disorder, David now helps others on their path to recovery, sharing his personal story to inspire hope, reduce stigma, and encourage engagement—particularly among men who may find it difficult to talk about mental health.

He also contributes to the development of EIIP workshops, including the service’s innovative Canal Boat project, which teaches service users to drive a boat—an initiative designed to build confidence and aid recovery through hands-on learning and empowerment.

David received his award during the trust’s 17th annual Staff Awards, an event held at Reigate Manor Hotel on Wednesday, 14 May. Over 160 guests attended, including Councillor Rich Michalowski, Mayor Elect of the Borough of Reigate and Banstead.

Reflecting on the recognition, David said: “Having been cared for by the team I now volunteer with and to be recognised at such a prestigious event celebrating the incredible work so many people do within the trust has been extremely humbling. Volunteering with EIIP has been so rewarding in so many ways, from helping to organise groups to being able to share my lived experience—every aspect of my journey has been supported by our incredible team.”

David’s nominator added: “He has overcome his challenges and now proactively supports others. He is warm, welcoming and has a lovely sense of humour he brings to everything.”

Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides a wide range of specialist services in mental health, learning disabilities, and substance misuse. Operating across Surrey, North East Hampshire, and parts of Sussex, the trust also delivers social care for individuals with learning disabilities in Croydon and autism assessment services in Hampshire. With a workforce of over 2,400 staff across 39 sites, the trust is a major regional provider. This independent recognition underscores the Trust’s ongoing role in promoting recovery-focused, person-centred care through the dedication of staff and volunteers alike.

**Image L-R:** Graham Wareham, David Laycock, Peer Support Worker, Andrew Jackman, Lead Governor

## Yes to chocolate, tea, apples and grapes

6 June 2025



We might have another reason to enjoy our daily cup of tea or small piece of dark chocolate, as a new study from the University of Surrey has found that naturally occurring compounds called flavan-3-ols – found in cocoa, tea, apples and grapes – may improve blood pressure and the health of our blood vessels.

The research, published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology, analysed data from 145 randomised controlled studies, and found that regular consumption of flavan-3-ols can lead to a reduction in blood pressure readings, particularly in people with elevated or high blood pressure. In some cases, the average blood pressure-lowering effects were comparable to those seen with some medications.

Flavan-3-ols were also found to improve the function of the endothelium – the inner lining of blood vessels – which is crucial for overall cardiovascular health. This improvement occurred independently of blood pressure changes, suggesting a broader positive impact on the circulatory system.

Professor Christian Heiss, lead-author of the study and Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of Surrey, said:

“The findings are encouraging for those looking for accessible ways to manage their blood pressure and support their heart health through enjoyable dietary changes. Incorporating small amounts of commonly consumed foods like tea, apples, dark chocolate, or cocoa powder into a daily balanced diet could provide beneficial amounts of flavan-3-ols.

“While not a replacement for prescribed medications or medical advice, including more flavan-3-ol-rich foods in a daily routine could be a valuable addition to a healthy lifestyle, especially for those with higher blood pressure. These are findings that, although promising, require ongoing investigation.”