

Press release: Public Health England buys the GSK site at Harlow

PHE announced today (7 July 2017) that it has bought the vacant GSK site at Harlow where it plans to build a £400 million world-leading home for public health science.

PHE will create a centre of excellence for research, health improvement and protection and bring together world-renowned scientists working to protect and improve the health of the nation.

PHE plans to create a campus where it will re-locate staff and facilities from Porton in Wiltshire and Colindale in north London as well as its headquarters functions from central London.

Richard Gleave, PHE Deputy Chief Executive said:

Our move to Harlow will create a world-class science campus for public health, of international significance and real benefits for the local community. The decision to buy the site now has been taken after careful consideration of the advantages and represents best value to the British taxpayer. This includes reduced running costs and the ability to carry out a number of further specialist additional surveys which will save us considerable time and money and provide invaluable information for the more detailed design work planned for later in the year.

We are also responding to the local community's desire to see PHE move to Harlow as soon as possible. We hope today's announcement will be a massive boost to the town and surrounding area.

The site and assets were purchased for £25 million which independent analysis has shown represents extremely good value for PHE's particular needs and the taxpayer. This follows a significant period of close collaboration between PHE and GSK.

Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of Harlow Council, said:

As the town celebrates its 70th birthday, and we look ahead to the next 70 years, this development will play a major part in Harlow's bright future. New jobs and opportunities for local people and local businesses will be created and Harlow will be on the world map, leading the way as the place for protecting and improving lives. Securing Public Health England's relocation to Harlow is all part of the jigsaw being put in place for Harlow's future with new jobs, new investment and improving local people's skills.

Today's announcement comes just a few weeks before PHE expects to submit a planning application to refurbish a number of the current buildings and construct new ones on the Pinnacles Estate site. The plans include new and converted laboratories and a visitor centre.

It is anticipated that the first staff will move to Harlow in 2021 with the site fully operational by 2024. At that time up to 2,750 people could be based at the Science Hub with scope for further expansion to 3,250.

Visit www.gov.uk/phe/harlow for up to date information about the Science Hub.

Contact PHE for further information:

1. [Public Health England](http://www.gov.uk/phe) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](https://twitter.com/PHE_uk) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.
2. PHE submitted an Outline Business Case to Government in July 2014. An interim decision was taken in September 2015 to move the majority of PHE functions from Porton to Harlow. In November, the government supported a further proposal to move PHE science facilities at Colindale to Harlow to create a single integrated campus.
3. PHE is now working to submit an outline planning application over summer 2017.
4. It is hoped the science campus will be fully operational by 2024 with the first construction work expected to start in 2019.