

Backing the troops

Colchester Garrison PFI



With Sodexo, there is a willingness to make things work that is crucial for any service provider,' says Stewart Ness, CEO, RMPA Services plc, the entity that manages the serviced accommodation in Merville Barracks at Colchester Garrison. 'They always look to find solutions, instead of putting up barriers. It's a very valuable attribute in a partner.'

Sodexo is proud to have provided catering and facilities management services to Colchester Garrison and its minor units since 2004. The military base is the home of 16 Air Assault Brigade – the UK's most rapidly deployable and powerful air manoeuvre fighting formation. The 460-acre site is home to approximately 3,500 military and 750 civilian personnel.

SODEXO SERVICES:

- Catering and mess management
- Cleaning
- Garrison amenities - sports facilities bookings and management
- Retail and leisure
- Security services
- Accommodation services
- Transport services
- Military Quartermaster Services, armoury, ammunition, clothing
- Laundry, dry cleaning, footwear repair and tailoring services
- Pest control
- Office support – provision of qualified staff in key office posts in support of the military
- Training support services
- Grounds maintenance (management of a subcontractor)



A LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

Sodexo is one of four shareholders in a Private Finance Initiative at the Garrison – a £2.2bn through-life contract that includes approximately £560m of capital works. The 35-year project underlines Sodexo's commitment to the British Armed Forces, and to sustaining and developing long-term, partnerships with its customers.

The project required considerable input and investment. The first step was the provision of 135 new and refurbished buildings, providing living and working accommodation for approximately 3,500 troops.

Since the completion of the construction and refurbishment phases in 2008, Sodexo's ongoing commitment is to ensuring that the new site systems and buildings portfolio run smoothly. From feeding troops and tailoring, to providing the same exciting retail choices on site that soldiers could experience on the high street, Sodexo's focus is on enriching the lives of the servicemen and women, and civilians, living and working within Merville Barracks.

EMBRACING NEW CHALLENGES

'One of the challenges here in Colchester,' explains Stewart Ness, 'was that we were the first big development to construct and implement a new food system for the military. Our Central Production Unit acts as the catering hub for the barracks. It takes in raw food products from the private sector, then issues everything out to finishing kitchens. At the time it was a challenging new system, so there were lots of lessons to learn, and Sodexo has done that well. I've been impressed with their dedication to getting things right.'

'I've been working with Sodexo for over ten years now. For me, the biggest benefit of having Sodexo on board is working with a well-established services provider. Sodexo is a worldwide operator, well known to the Ministry of Defence, and embedded in defence contracts across the UK.'

'The company brings to the table a wealth of experience from different kinds of contracts. Our relationship is very strong. We have found that Sodexo is a professional company that endeavours to provide good services within budget. It's a very rewarding partnership.'