

Futuristic 'village' concept launches at Worthy Down Station

Constantly evolving its defence services to meet the needs of today's military, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), supported by their partner Sodexo, has launched 'Village' – a new concept that incorporates one stop catering, retail and leisure facilities at Worthy Down Station in Hampshire.

Designed to build community, create connections and foster morale among the Royal Navy, British Army, and Royal Air Force personnel who live at Worthy Down, the new facility was officially opened by Group Captain Nicholas Brittain on Thursday 30 July.

Group Captain Brittain said:

This wonderful facility is a result of a true partnership between Sodexo and the Worthy Down Station. By working together, we can provide tremendous improvements to the quality of life for our military and civil service personnel. Sodexo personnel, at all levels, are key enablers of our defence output.

The 'Village' in full swing at Worthy Down. Crown copyright.

Transforming the tri-services amenity and with a strong focus on the wellbeing of military and civil service personnel, 'Village' will feature 3 main zones; a social and meeting lounge, a micro theatre and a gaming area. Each zone is specifically designed to bring people together, encourage engagement, collaboration and boost camaraderie among defence personnel.

A combination of a restaurant, café, bar and leisure services, provide a relaxed social environment as well as a place to unwind after the working day, meeting the unique and varied needs of defence personnel, their families and visitors.

Driven by a dedicated manager and using the latest technologies, 'Village' offers something for everyone with a unique calendar of events and activities, to meet the requirements of local users.

Paul Anstey, CEO, Government & Agencies, Sodexo UK & Ireland said:

We designed 'Village' based on insight from the DIO and research that we commissioned with IPOS Mori and Kings College London to provide us with in-depth insight into understanding the most pressing needs of today's forces personnel, the wider defence

community and the MOD.

The integrated approach considers all aspects of military life and focuses on reducing isolation, low morale and boredom to improve recruitment, retention, wellbeing and the creation of a focused, agile workforce. It also brings a more positive quality of life for those living and working at the base.

The military is a small, close knit community, so it was essential that 'Village' design reflected this concept.

Andy Honnor, DIO's Regional Head for the South East said:

Group Captain Brittain had a vision which DIO supported and Sodexo built upon using recent experience in other areas; 'Village' is the manifestation of this vision.

Fantastic collaboration between DIO and Sodexo meant that this project was delivered on time and within budget. It wasn't easy and it is a testament to what can be achieved when there is a thirst to find solutions at every stage.

The results are breath taking; there is nothing else this 'futuristic' on the MOD estate.

The interior of the futuristic 'Village' at Worthy Down. Crown copyright.

Having been opened only a matter of days, 'Village' is already proving to be a popular meeting spot with personnel on base commenting that the hub is 'a modern and bright area to relax and socialise after a long day', a 'very good multi-use facility' and would 'highly recommend this place to new recruits'.

'Village' is part of the new Defence College of Logistics, Policing and Administration, a £300-million tri-service facility that DIO is building at Worthy Down. It forms part of the MOD's strategy to rationalise its estate and improve training provision and living quarters for service personnel.