

ESS invests in the Customer Dining and Retail Experience at HMS Drake

3 years ago



ESS, the Defence, Energy and Government Services sector of [Compass Group UK & Ireland](#), has introduced 'Drake Village', a contemporary dining and retail space designed to improve the lived experience for service personnel at HMS Drake.

The project transformed a small shop, storeroom and unused function hall into a vibrant social hub available for use throughout the day. The investment has increased casual dining and retail sales by 27%.

A retail store provides customers with a selection of hot and cold food to go, including breakfast baps, pastries, sandwiches, baguettes, wraps, pizzas and salads, as well as a choice of hot and cold drinks. Food is freshly prepared on site and the offer changes throughout the day.

A fully franchised Greggs, located next to the store, stocks a range of customer favourites from the high street, with hot and cold food and drinks available throughout the day.

Purchases can be taken away or enjoyed in the dining area which incorporates different zones with a mixture of tables and chairs and soft seating, contemporary lighting and plants. The layout and furniture enable customers to use the area in different ways, from relaxing and socialising to working alone or holding informal meetings.

To ensure the facility meets the varied requirements of the site population, the store stocks food for later with fresh, ambient, chilled and frozen products available. A non-food range tailored to the military customer includes toiletries, household goods, clothing and other useful items.

At the Waterfront Café in the dockyard, ESS has introduced 'Stacked' which offers subs and salads to

customers wishing to pop in throughout the day.

The work was undertaken in collaboration with the site client and Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

Captain David Preece, Deputy Naval Base Commander & Captain of the Base, commented: “Both the Village and the improved waterfront facilities have enormously improved the quality of life for everyone in and around HMS DRAKE. There is a relaxed, contemporary feel that provides our people an inviting, comfortable venue to shop or enjoy stand-easy and its success can be easily gauged by the number of people who use it; I routinely pass through the Village and it is always busy with a good cross section of Service people of all ranks and Rates and our civilian colleagues.”

Anthony Collings, Armada PFI Team Leader and Business Manager – DIO, commented: “The substantial investment which ESS injected into the contract to enhance their retail portfolio was supported by collaboration and a strong partnership ethos. This has noticeably turned two retail areas in the Armada contract into destinations, which are thoroughly enjoyed by Service and Civilian customers in both Drake and the Waterfront locations. Drake Village is now a busy hub within the establishment which provides a broad range of products and an extremely pleasant environment for our customers.”