

Aspire Defence Services awards Sodexo £730m contract

3 years ago



FM service provider [Sodexo](#)'s commitment to delivering a great 'lived experience' for the military has been a key factor in the retention of its contract with Aspire Defence Services (ADS).

This involves the delivery of catering, retail, mess management and cleaning services across all the garrisons of Project Allenby/Connaught. The new contract is for a further 17 years and nine months (with a 10 year benchmarking clause) and is worth £730m over the initial 10 year period.

Project Allenby/Connaught, part of the MOD estate managed by Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), is one of the largest infrastructure private finance initiatives (PFIs) ever let by the MOD. Since 2006, the 35-year contract has been improving living and working environments for British soldiers through provision of modern, high-quality, fully-serviced and purpose-built accommodation in Aldershot and across Salisbury Plain.

[The](#) company has held the Living Accommodation Services contract since it began in 2006 and its 1,450-strong team is responsible for feeding over one third of the British Army. Over the years, it has worked closely with ADS and DIO to ensure the lived experience of service personnel has been at the forefront of the services it provides. This has included using bespoke research commissioned by Sodexo to gain a deeper insight into what service personnel want and how they want it delivered. From this, the company has developed food services which are modern, flexible and tailored to the unique needs of military personnel whilst reflecting the latest trends from the high street.

CEO Government Paul Anstey said: *"We are delighted to have retained this important contract. We have worked in partnership with ADS since 2006 to improve the lived experience of all those who live and work*

on the military bases within Project Allenby/Connaught. ADS has been resolute in its commitment to the welfare of those living and working on the different sites and we are proud to have collaborated with them throughout to ensure that the services we deliver support the health, safety and wellbeing of all."

ADS managing director Mark Carr said: *"Sodexo has proven to be a trusted partner and its commitment to ensuring service personnel living and working on the garrisons have the best experience possible. We look forward to continuing our collaborative relationship with Sodexo and DIO to ensuring Project Allenby/Connaught achieves its goal of making soldiers' lives better".*

The company's operations increased significantly in 2020 following a major infrastructure programme to accommodate around 4,000 personnel relocating to garrisons across Salisbury Plain as part of the joint Army and DIO Army Basing Programme (ABP). Its contract includes the provision of Living Accommodation Services for 11,000 en-suite single living accommodation rooms; 43 officer, warrant officer and sergeants' messes; 14 junior ranks diners, including seven super diners, each feeding up to 2,000 military and civilian personnel; 15 Costcutter convenience stores, 16 coffee shops, two workplace diners, five pubs and three mobile catering units.

The company has a strong commitment to ensuring its operations have a positive impact on the communities in which it works; Project Allenby/Connaught is no exception, and it reports that it continues to support local charities and community activities including local colleges and schools, providing training and work experience opportunities at centres such as the Vine Centre in Aldershot as well as organising food bank donations and fundraising activities. Sodexo's team raised £12,000 through various activities in 2022 for the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation.