

Point 3 – Northern Estate

Comment not held

Response - 19/01/2011 14:25 - Thank you for your positive feedback regarding the jerk quorn dish that you recently enjoyed in the debate.

It does not feature on the current menu cycle but I will certainly ensure that we try to include it when we develop our new cycle. I'll also try to see if we can have it on a busier day of the week than Friday.

Further comment - 04 November 2010 13:53 - Thank you so much for putting the Jerk Quorn back on the menu in the Debate. I had some today and it was superb. It was proving a very popular choice this lunchtime. I will be coming back for some more this evening, if there is any left!

Comment - 20 December 2010 18:25 - Just had the cream of leek soup with sweetcorn, cannellini beans and chorizo (Mon @ The Debate) - amazing soup! Perfectly seasoned, great balance of flavours, compliments to the chef! Any chance of getting the recipe?

Response - 25/01/2011 10:24 - Firstly, apologies that I have taken such a long time to respond to you – your feedback regarding the leek chorizo and bean soup you enjoyed in the debate before Christmas unfortunately got a little lost in our new feedback system. Despite that, thank you for your comments and please find attached the recipe for you to try at home.

Comment - 21 January 2011 15:22 - The steak sandwich meal served in the portcullis cafeteria was simply outstanding today (Fri 21st January). My meals there are always delicious, however today the staff surpassed themselves!

Response - 21/01/2011 16:30 - Thank you for your positive feedback. I shall ensure the team in the Debate receives your comments.

Comment - 14 February 2011 14:49 - The pizza today at the Debate was awesome! As an Italian-American with many restaurants in the family I know my pizza and this was right there up with the familys. Well done, Chef.

Response - 17/02/2011 14:14 - Thank you for your fantastic feedback! I am copying your kind words on to our Food & Beverage Manager in Portcullis House who will ensure his team receive your compliment.

Comment - Every day I treat myself to a large, skinny, vanilla latte from the despatch box and most days it is lovely and well worth the £2. However, I must complain that this week the temperature of the coffee has been lukewarm, bordering cold. Today I had finished the takeaway drink well before I reached my office in the Palace - not good enough. It usually lasts me an hour. If this continues I shall have to start buying my lattes from outside the House on the way in. I feel that I deserve a £2 refund.

Response - 08/03/2011 12:41 - Thank you for taking the time to let me know the recent problems that you have experienced with your daily latte from the Despatch Box.

I have discussed this with the team who, as well as joining me in sending their apologies, also have vowed to ensure that you should not have this problem again.

Next time you visit the Despatch Box, please take along a print out of this email and our Baristas will be happy to make you a complimentary replacement. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further suggestions regarding the service provided.

Comment - 02 March 2011 12:42 - I have worked at the Palace of Westminster for almost 20 years. Over the past few years there has been a steady decline in the standard of food on offer from Bellamys, the Terrace and laterly the Debate. Often the food is under cooked (even baked potatoes) or over cooked (e.g. mushy broccoli), the use and cooking of herbs and spices is inconsistent, often too much and not cooked. Portion sizes are often very small and members/male members of staff are frequently given larger portions than women! This has been noted by many staff. Sandwiches are of a particularly poor quality and the vegetarian 'range' is very limited. This has deteriorated further in recent months. Why are only 'low salt' sachets available in the debate? Normal salt sachets are available in Bellamys. Glasses in the Debate are always grubby and frequently there are no cups/mugs in the Despatch box, paper cups are used instead. Sadly I could go on. Your comments please.

Response - 08 March 2011 17:15 - It is unfortunate that you are not free to meet with me as to be able to provide a thorough response and act upon your feedback I do require more detailed information. However, I have responded to your points below as best I can with the information provided.

Food Standard

I cannot comment on individual cases of over/under cooking as without specifics it is difficult to detail a response. With the high volume of customers we serve across the Estate it is difficult to satisfy the taste of every customer. To one customer an item may appear over cooked or too highly spiced, whilst to the next the item could be under cooked and not spicy enough. We always ask our customers to inform us if they have a problem with any item purchased so that we can rectify the issue immediately.

Portion Size

I spend a large proportion of my day monitoring service in the various outlets across the Estate and I cannot recall witnessing larger portions being served to Members or male staff. If I could have specific details then I would be able to address the issue with the staff member concerned. Our serving staff will gladly give you extra should you feel that your portion does not represent value for money.

Sandwich Range

Our sandwich range is under review and the contract for sandwich supply is currently out to tender so changes are on their way to the range which will be implemented as soon as possible. Salt Sachets

Salt sachets were removed from stock in the debate approximately eight months ago due to low usage and the fact salt is freely available on the tables. Yours is the first comment that I have received; I will monitor the situation and should demand arise, reinstate the salt sachets. Glassware/crockery

Our hygiene standards are rigorously upheld and we are one of a small number of catering premises in Westminster that have achieved 5 stars in the national 'Scores on the Doors' hygiene rating system. I myself have not noted grubby glassware in the debate. Due to the high customer numbers the glassware is washed repeatedly and the glass can sometimes appear hazy and scratched from the dishwashing machine due to the high wash temperatures involved. Should the dishwashing machine in Portcullis House break down meaning we are unable to wash crockery/cutlery to required hygiene standards, then we switch to disposable items, including cups. This has happened on a number of occasions recently and would explain any shortage of crockery in the Despatch Box. I do hope that the above goes some way to allaying your concerns. Should you have any further comments then please contact me.

Further Comments - 09 March 2011 12:24 - I think I mentioned baked potatoes, pretty basic and served every day. Frequently under cooked, I have mentioned this to staff. I have also been served chicken that is dark pink inside (I did return to the chef with this but as it was bought as a take away this was rather a pain!) I have asked for more as very often good value for money is not evident e.g. couscous and vegetables (very cheap to make) costing more than the two meat/poultry dishes available on the same day. Those serving food in Bellamy's (I no longer eat there) have been reluctant to serve more food as they are reprimanded by the Chef! I have witnessed this more than once. Chef told off staff member serving me as I asked for two spoons of parmesan rather than one! Strangely staff are able to help themselves to parmesan in the Debate. That is excellent news, I and colleagues frequently go to Prêt à Manger or Tesco for better quality and better price. There are pepper and 'low salt' sachets available. Could we please have some normal blue salt sachets? Not all tables have salt and pepper, especially the tables outside the Adjournment (the salt does not flow out of them very well either). Blue salt sachets are freely available in Bellamy's. I have the same problem at home! Perhaps you could take a look at the glasses by the water dispenser, I have given up using them. Would it be possible to have ice at the water dispenser? Bellamy's and The Terrace both provide this. I was told by Despatch box staff that they were short staffed and unable to collect and process dirty crockery. As I am sure you know, the Despatch Box is very popular and there is often a large queue, not sure what the answer is as there is not a lot of room for extra staff behind the counter. Perhaps one extra member of staff clearing up during busy periods?

Comment - 02 March 2011 15:58 - The steak and kidney pie on Monday was the tastiest I have ever had. (Don't tell my wife!) Exquisite. Compliments to the chef and his obviously excellent palate. Thank you Bellamy's.

Response - 09/03/2011 16:40 - Thank you very much! We really appreciate the feedback. I have passed on your comments to our sous chef.

Comment - 07 April 2011 09:32 - I just wanted you to know what a pleasure it is for me to visit and eat at your Restaurant. I'm writing this not only as a 'customer' - although as such I happen to be a vegetarian and the choice of food and the presentation and the care given is so rare and exceptional - but really I am writing as a 'professional'. I was with [REMOVED] for 34 years and eventually was Managing Director. I know how much work and detailed attention must go into such a 'service', to ensure that everything is there and available

and looking fresh and delicious all day and particularly to maintain this at 'peak' trading. Well done! This is just to thank you and congratulate you and your team on a difficult job done well. AND to express to you how much pleasure you give to so many people who are working so hard in this place. Thank you

Response not held

Comment - 29 June 2011 12:56 - I would be really grateful if there could be a bit more variety in the vending machine in NSN. Today's choice of drinks was coke or diet coke, and there was a choice of about 2 chocolate bars. I know this is nowhere near an important thing, but it would brighten up my day slightly :-)

Response - 21/07/2011 12:27 - Thank you very much for taking the time to send us your feedback regarding the variety of snacks in the vending machine in NSN.

First of all my sincerest apologies for taking this long to get back to you and secondly apologies for the poor service you have received from our vending contactors. The reason behind this delay is due to the fact that our vending contactor is currently waiting for their operator to be security cleared as the previous operator has left the company.

I know the machine has been quite empty for a while so I have been trying to organise for the operator to come in early next week so I can escort them to the vending machine so they can fully stock it. I hope this has been helpful.

If in future you have any questions regarding any of the vending facilities in NSN or anywhere else in the estate, please feel free to contact me and I would be more than happy to assist you.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for your valid custom and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Comment - 27 July 2011 15:06 - I am annoyed and disappointed in respect of my experience in the debate this lunch time. I purchased the honey glazed duck leg, it was served with little or no dressing, the honey glaze was baked on and the duck dry, even by duck standards. I asked for rice and was told it was part of another meal and that I would have to pay the full price for two meals! I declined the rice and by default took the wedged potatoes, which were not to my liking and also dry. With hindsight, I should have not taken the meal and eaten elsewhere. I would appreciate your feedback as to why I was not allowed the rice, clearly paying twice is not an option. I would also request on this occasion that I be refunded the cost of my meal. It is one thing to be treated badly, it is not my policy to pay for the privilege.

Response - 29/07/2011 11:04 - I am sorry that you had a disappointing dining experience in the debate on 27th July 2011.

The duck leg should have come with a dressed salad which would also have contained orange segments and cucumber. The staff are instructed that if a customer requires more sauce/ dressing with anything then our aim is to please the customer and give them what is required. The staff are also aware that if a side order is required (be it rice from another dish, potatoes or vegetables) then if it improves the dining experience they should serve what is requested within reason.

The whole team will be made aware of your comments and training will be undertaken to improve the customer service. Please see either Supervisors in the Debate for a full refund.

Once again, apologies for your disappointing dining experience.

Comment - 29 July 2011 10:24 - I've got some suggestions re the partial closure of the Debate during recess. I know that it will be open at lunchtimes but customers do want access to sandwiches etc outside of lunch service hours. The selection at the Despatch Box is extremely limited – I know it's down to display space. Would it be possible to use a portable cascade sited near the Despatch Box (between the staff access and the lifts)? Also if users want fresh juices or a filter coffee they have to go to Bellamy's now. Can they be provided at the Despatch Box? What about anyone that wants just chilled water – can they access the supply in the Debate?

Response - 29 July 2011 11:11 - Thank you for taking the time to pass on comments regarding the works in PCH this summer. Obviously the closure is causing some upheaval! However, I am confident that I and my team have planned sufficiently to minimise the disruption to our customers. The plan we have should not necessitate additional refrigerated displays for the sale of sandwiches throughout the day. However, should this not be the case, then the option has already been arranged to implement should need be. Fresh juices are available from the Despatch Box. Space restrictions unfortunately mean filter coffee will not be. The chilled water fountain in the Debate will be operational and accessible throughout the period.

Further Comment - 29 July 2011 12:07 - Thank you for your swift response. The Debate looked rather shut when I got a coffee at the Despatch Box about 10 minutes ago. Re the juice – when I was in the DB queue at about 9:30 the guy in front of me was directed to Bellamys' as he wanted juice. The only juice on display just now was grapefruit. Re the filter coffee – when the Portcullis Cafe has been closed the 6th floor cafe has had filter on offer – from pump pots if I recall correctly. There's rather a price jump between filter and (say) a medium Americano.

Further Response - 29/07/2011 12:51 - The Debate will look shut today – because it is. Worry not - just for today and this has been advertised both in every electronic staff information vehicle possible and via table talkers and posters throughout the Estate.

I will investigate the juice situation. There should be both orange and grapefruit plus smoothies. I saw myself earlier this morning that all were available. As filter coffee will be available from the Debate during opening hours and also Bellamy's, the Despatch Box will not be serving it during the summer works period.

Further comment - 29/07/2011 15:07 - Yes on closer examination of the table talkers and posters it did say that the Debate was closed today. What may have caused some confusion was that firstly that fact was placed under your contact details and on the Debate there were signs saying it was closed AND the revised opening times. It certainly confused my colleagues. Thanks you for your comments re the juices and coffee. I see that there are now juices on display in the Despatch Box chiller. P.S There's the usual stack of CRS crockery and cutlery

in the tea points in Norman Shaw South. Some staff obviously can't read the posters re disposables or can't be bothered to return anything.

Comment not held

Response - 14 September 2011 15:58 - Thank you for your recent comment regarding a seafood soup in the Debate. Unfortunately, I cannot find from my records when we featured this dish. You are correct in assuming that a seafood soup would be expensive! However, as we plan new menus, I will certainly pass on your comments to the chefs to see whether we can make such a soup again.

Further comment - 14/09/2011 15:59 - Thanks very much. It must have been a one off with leftovers from another dish. It was really lovely! My colleague and I had about 3 bowls each! Well, I guess we lucked out that day. Thanks for the response.

Comment not held

Response - 20 September 2011 08:49 - In order to answer your recent query regarding the charge for your breakfast in Bellamy's, I need to ascertain whether you had: Fresh or tinned tomatoes and how many? Mushrooms, how many? Toast, if any? Many thanks

Further comment - 20 September 2011 12:25 - I had one fresh tomato (two halves), a portion of mushrooms (do you really expect me to count them?) and no toast.

Response - 20/09/2011 15:30 - It does appear that you have been overcharged, for which I apologise. The correct price is £3.70. I have asked the supervisor in the restaurant to discuss the situation with the team involved to ensure this does not happen again. Next time you are in the restaurant, please ask for [NAME REMOVED] and she will refund you the overcharged amount.

Comment not held

Response - 03 October 2011 15:18 - I am very sorry that you were not satisfied with the pizza you purchased in the Debate last week. All pizzas should be the same size as each tray is cut into ten portions. As regards the quality of the toppings, I am again sorry that the ingredients did not meet the Debate's high standards. As way of recompense, please see Supervisor of the restaurant, who will arrange a refund for you. If you do have a problem again with either the food or service in the restaurant, please mention it at the time to one of the team so that we can rectify the situation immediately.

Further comment - 03/10/2011 16:02 - Thank you for your timely response, however, it is not necessary for me to receive a refund as it was my choice to make. I sent you my feed-back as it is important for C&R to receive such information for future consideration. I would like to add that maybe if C&R is going to serve pizza in the future - it should have a thinner base and be moist/fresh to look and taste.

Comment - 26 September 2011 11:04 - Just a suggestion regarding the vending machine in Norman Shaw North - given that most people seem to get the munchies around mid-morning (hence 'elevenses'? or maybe it's just me?) I was wondering whether it might be possible to restock the vending machine earlier in the day, as it seems whenever I go in search of a snack it's either empty or in the process of being refilled.

Response - 05/10/2011 11:41 - [NAME REMOVED] has spoken to this lady direct and explained the operational issues regarding filling up machines at set times. We have agreed to stock more chocolate which is what she's after!

Comment - 03 October 2011 19:54 - Absolutely LOVE the new 'salad' choices being served in the Debate whilst the kitchen works are being completed. Will these be continued once you have full catering facilities again?

Response - 07/10/2011 10:16 - I am pleased that you like the revised salad selection we provided during the works carried out to the PCH kitchens to replace our own home made salads. As you are not the only person to have given positive feedback, we have decided to continue stocking them until further notice. There may be a reduced selection next week, but from the 17th October, the complete range will be available.

Comment - 19 October 2011 12:16 - Adjournment Loyalty card - buy 9 coffee's get one free. Please answer the following questions.
Is this offer open to all staff regardless of grade?
Does it operate at all times throughout the working week?
Are prices the same as the Despatch Box?

Response - 20/10/2011 16:52 - I write further to your comments regarding The Adjournment Coffee Loyalty card left on our intranet feedback page. The card is available to all staff and has been implemented to speed up customer coffee service in the atrium of PCH by providing an alternative outlet to purchase a coffee. However, currently the access regulations for the restaurant apply, so at the times when the restaurant is only available to Members', regular pass holders can take their beverage away to drink in the atrium or elsewhere, not in the restaurant. The service operates Monday afternoon and Tuesday to Thursday morning and afternoon in sitting periods only. The prices for take away beverages are the same as the Despatch Box.

Comment - 19 October 2011 15:26 - I always enjoy your selection of cakes in the Debate and in particular the carrot and gorgeous apple cakes. My mother is a big fan of carrot cake and I'm going home to Holland in a couple of weeks for a family event. I would love to take some cake over for her but that's unlikely to be a very sensible idea. I was therefore wondering if the cakes in the Debate were made by the Catering Department or whether they were bought in from somewhere? If it's the former, could I ask the cheeky question whether or not you would be able to send me a copy of the recipe so I can make a cake when I'm home? Many thanks for your time and trouble - I really appreciate it!

Response - Thank you for your email regarding our cakes, I am glad you enjoy them! We do not make them; they are supplied by a company called More Foods

and are part of their Handmade Delights range. Here is a link to their website:
<http://www.morefood.co.uk/about.html>

Comment not held

Response - 02/11/2011 14:28 - As requested, please find attached the jerk chicken recipe. Hope you enjoy!

Comment - 17 November 2011 12:12 - I just wanted to mention some things about the vegetarian options that you offer, especially in connection with the promotions. At the moment there is a "street food" promotion - there are LOADS of global street foods that are vegetarian (most even), yet every single item offered so far has contained either fish or meat. Vegetarian food doesn't have to be treated like a ghetto, most/all non-veggies will happily eat veggie food several times a week, either because of personal taste or for health or environmental reasons etc. **Why not offer veggie food as part of this promotion?** In contrast, the Vegan Week promotion saw all veggie options become vegan. **This is not so much an addition to the menu as a week of enforced veganism for the vegetarians. It would be nicer if these things could be more integrated, and not work on the assumption that only a few people want to eat vegetarian food.**

Response - 07/12/2011 12:44 - I was going through our feedback and realised that no one has actually come back to you directly regarding the feedback you left a couple of weeks ago. Apologies for this.

Our Executive Chef has passed on the following information, which I now duly forward to yourself. Many thanks for taking the time to send your feedback and apologies once again for the late response. The trial of the "Street Food" meal concept where we added a dish to the Debate menu was to *gauge* initial customer reaction to this style of food. We believed that to make this food as genuine as possible we would outsource the main ingredient sauces and marinades that are used in each dish. Our contracted grocery supplier was able to source a small company in the UK who make the regional Street Food sauces using authentic recipe ingredients for each type of dish. Unfortunately, because these are authentic, nearly all of their recipes use a fish or shellfish paste - although in small amounts - to achieve the specific flavours required. Due to the positive feedback from customers we are intending to include Street Food dishes to our cafeteria menus and will ensure that there are dedicated vegetarian options available.

On the other point we have to admit that we got it wrong only to have Vegan options in all cafeteria outlets giving vegetarians no option - we will use this as a lesson learnt and make sure it does not happen again. We do apologise if you were disappointed and hopefully, next year we will get it right!

