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# INDUSTRY WEEKLY DIGEST

YOUR WEEKLY DIGEST OF CONTEMPORARY INDUSTRY TRENDS

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## RESTAURANT BEHIND BARS

Changing Lives and  
Perceptions

As a restaurant within prison walls, The Clink provides vocational opportunities for prisoners to reduce reoffending rates. Despite its unconventional concept, The Clink's innovative approach to rehabilitation is worthy of exploring, as well as the concept's potential to spread.

In this week's Industry Digest, guest contributor and final year Undergraduate student, Horace Chow explains this approach and explores the benefits of it to prisoners and Industry alike.

Have a great weekend!

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surrey.ac.uk/SHTM | @SHTMatSurrey  
Editor: Mark Ashton | m.ashton@surrey.ac.uk



## A RESTAURANT BEHIND BARS THAT'S CHANGING LIVES AND PERCEPTIONS

Horace Chow

Making waves in the British restaurant scenes, the success of The Clink proves the market is shifting towards more ethical and sustainable practices. As Mintel reports, 56% of the UK customers with a higher education state that they would like to see more restaurants with a social purpose. Under the influence of cultural change theory, The Clink is at the forefront of this trend, with their emphasis on rehabilitation of prisoners, over 700 prisoners have been trained so far on this programme.

The Clink is also tapping into the trend towards experiential dining, where customers are looking for unique dining experiences that go beyond good food. The concept of dining in a prison, with prisoners as staff, offers customers a memorable and unique experience that they are likely to share across social media and through word-of-mouth.

According to The Clink, 70% of its graduates go on to find employment in the hospitality industry after their release from prison and this is a great achievement, as ex-offenders often struggle to find employment due to the stigma attached to their criminal records.

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The Clink's unique business model has challenged the traditional restaurant model by setting a precedent for ethical dining experiences, paving the way for other restaurants to follow in its footsteps to consider other underrepresented groups. The Clink has won several awards for its food and service, including a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence and a 3-star-rated Sustainable Restaurant Association award. These accolades have proven that employing prisoners and ex-offenders can still result in high-quality food and service regardless.

As we move towards a more socially responsible future, it is important to ask ourselves: can more businesses in the hospitality industry adopt The Clink's model of social enterprise? How can we promote similar initiatives to accomplish social goals?