

The bar where your cash is worthless

By Chris Baraniuk Technology of Business reporter
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Cashless establishments may be safer and more convenient, but are they more popular with the public at large?

After yet another break-in at south London pub the Crown and Anchor, Arber Rozhaja decided enough was enough.

Burglars were after cash lying around after lock-up, but what if there was never any cash on site at all?

Mr Rozhaja, operations director at the pub's parent firm, London Village Inns, calculated the volume of cash transactions and was bowled over.

"Somewhere in the region of 10-13% of the total revenue would be cash and the rest was card," he says.

So in October, the Crown and Anchor went fully cashless.

Customers can use debit cards, credit cards and contactless payments including Android Pay and Apple Pay. Signs dotted around the pub announced the move to customers: "Apologies, but it is the digital age."

Four of the firm's pubs now refuse cash, with the remaining two set to turn their backs on notes and coins in the New Year.

What began as a move to deter thieves has turned out to be a timely business decision, according to Mr Rozhaja.

For staff at London Village Inns' businesses, the benefits of working in a cashless public house include not having to count up endless piles of coins at the end of the night. And managers no longer need to travel across town with bags of cash to be lodged at the bank.

He adds that while he's had a few complaints from customers, the response has generally been positive. There has been no discernible fall in business.

Getting rid of cash frees up retail staff so they can spend more time with customers, adds Mr Birch.

Adapted from BBC NEWS