

REFLECTIONS, REFLECTIONS, REFLECTIONS

Happy New Year in advance!

We can all agree that 2022 has been memorable, so it's excellent to reflect as 2023 approaches with some new years resolutions.

What should we reflect on?

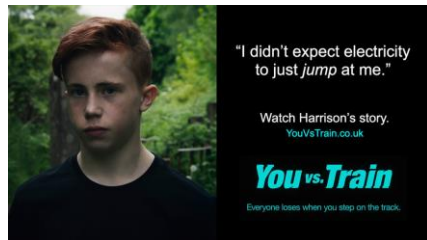
Don't dwell on your mistakes! Use this time to learn from them and turn negatives into positives. Reflect on the main events, actions and your past decisions to determine your performance in the new year.

Here's a list of areas to look at when reflecting on your past year:

- Health
- Family
- Relationships
- Career
- Education
- Mental health (self-care)
- Personal growth/Self-development



HARRISON'S STORY



Harrison Ballantyne's heart-breaking story was shared. The tale of the 11-year-old who had lost his life was circulated on social media and on national news channels, raising awareness of the dangers of being near overhead power cables and train lines.

The initiative was driven by OTM Operations Control & Fatigue Manager, Laura Cook who holds a personal connection to Harrison and the Ballantyne family.

[You vs Train](#) is a hub of videos and resources catered towards schools, parents and the rail industry to help raise awareness on the dangers of trespassing on the railways.

Read more [here](#) and click on the image above to watch the livestream



7 FUTURE

Colas Rail UK's path toward good physical and mental wellbeing has been supported by 7futures and SuperWellness throughout 2022, providing our teams with the resources they need to improve their wellbeing.

7Futures have developed a dedicated [Microsite](#), including information on a variety of ways to improve our physical wellbeing.

Multiple engaging webinars were hosted by SuperWellness, providing valuable content and the opportunity to ask health questions. You can find all of the information on the [Wellbeing homepage](#).

For more information on wellness contact [Jude Tymon](#) Head of Wellbeing, Health, and Safety Behaviours.



MERRY CHRISTMAS! ENJOY SOME VEGAN CHRISTMAS MEALS

Here are a few delicious and healthy vegan Christmas recipes to try out this festive season:

- o [Easy vegan wellington](#) - Enjoy this mushroom and sweet potato wellington with cranberries
- o [Vegan mince pies](#) - With a cherry and hazelnut filling
- o [Vegan Pigs in Maple Parsnip Blankets](#) - Delicious sweet maple flavours of the traditional festive nibble
- o [Vegan Christmas cake](#) - Christmas cake topped with a light and fluffy vegan meringue and candied cranberries
- o [Vegan Brownies](#) - Classic fudgy brownies. Top it with your favourite vegan ice cream



VEGANUARY



[Veganuary](#) is a challenge that requires participants to consume solely plant-based foods (no dairy or meat) during the month of January. There are vegan alternatives for almost all meat and dairy foods now; try some, improve your health, and help the environment!

It's also great to get creative with your meals and discover the many [delicious and varied vegan dishes out there](#).

ALCOHOL AWARENESS



Tips to drink safe this Christmas:

- o **Spread your drinking** over three or more days and avoid [binge drinking](#)
- o **Don't drink on an empty stomach.** A healthy meal before you start drinking, and snacks between drinks can help to slow down the absorption of alcohol, helping you stay in control.
- o Try having a no or low alcohol alternative or an alcohol-free mocktail – they are just as tasty.

Colas Rail UK has invested in an Email programme available to every employee for the next year to help you stay healthy, cut down and keep your drinking in control.



[Drink less in 30 days link](#) and QR code to the left

DIABETES AWARENESS

Tis the season to eat sweets 🎵🎵🎵

It definitely is the time for indulgence and celebrations. But, we have to remember that many traditional Christmas foods tend to be higher in saturated fat, free (added) sugars and salt than our usual diets.

Stay Active - This can help you manage blood sugar levels, blood pressure and blood fats and manage your weight. There are lots of easy and fun ways to fit in some exercise, even when it's cold. A brisk walk is a great way to stay active. Jumping about with the children, dancing the night away at a party, or going ice skating all help as well. You could also try some active party games!

ELIMINATING CHRISTMAS WASTE AND REDUCING PLASTICS

Even during this joyous season, we should be thinking about the future and prioritising sustainability in all of our choices. Here are some ideas for how we can all continue to save the environment while having a good time during the holidays:

- **54 million plates of food are wasted** on Christmas day. The wild birds in your garden will eat mince pies and Christmas cake, crushed/grated nuts, cooked potatoes of any sort, sprouts and cheese.
- **Don't buy glittery paper and cards** – glitter makes them non-recyclable as it clogs recycling machines.
- **Do it yourself or not** - If making your own Christmas decorations is just not your thing, check out local handcraft markets, charities for handmade cards and decorations.
- **Donate unwanted presents to charity shops** – one person's waste could be another person's treasure.
- **Choose to buy (and receive) plastic-free presents** – support local businesses that are suffering due to the energy/cost-of-living crisis.
- **Give the gift of time** - Volunteer your time to help out a friend, family or charity, to free up time for the fun times.



REACHING OUT DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Winter can be a difficult time, shorter days, the temptation to participate in celebrations, and financial concerns can all lead to increased stress.

For some people, being alone can make an already stressful time of year much more stressful. At this time of year, pay attention to the things that make you happy and comfortable.

- **Prioritise what's best for you.**
- **Take a break from the news and social media.**
- **Find your own traditions.**
- **Connect with your community**



If you need to speak to someone contact **Samaritans** on 116 123, support is available 24/7

USEFUL TOOLS & LINKS

- For non urgent questions on wellbeing email: wellbeingenquiries@colasrail.com
- Aviva Wellbeing and Aviva Digital GP App available to all Colas Rail UK staff.
- [Construction Industry Helpline](https://www.colasrail.com/construction-industry-helpline) 0345 605 1956
- [Able Futures](https://www.ablefutures.org.uk) Helpline 0800 321 3137 (8am to 10.30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Helpline: 0800 030 5182
- [Top 10 UK Mental Health Charities](https://www.top10ukmentalhealthcharities.org.uk)