\*\*\*\* Strictly Embargoed until Wednesday 8th May 2019\*\*\*

Virgin Trains customers can now bid for last-minute First Class upgrades with Seatfrog app

* *Seatfrog app allows customers to bid for upgrades*
* *Those bidding can get a First-Class seat for as little as a £10*
* *The free app will be available on routes across the Virgin Trains UK network*

Virgin Trains customers can now secure a last-minute upgrade thanks to a collaboration with Seatfrog, an app which lets users take part in an auction for seats in First Class.

The train operator has partnered with Seatfrog on its routes across the UK, to enable more people than ever to enjoy the perks of upgrading.

From today, (May 8), customers will be able to bid from 24 hours right up to 30 minutes before departure with just a few taps of their smartphone where upgrades to First Class can cost from as little as £10. Completely seamless and easy-to-use, there’s no hassle of extra paperwork, printing tickets or additional fees when bidding on a Virgin Trains journey with Seatfrog.

The Seatfrog app works by creating a live auction system for unfilled First Class seats, allowing passengers to bid against other travellers to upgrade as solo travellers or as a group. Those not wanting to wait can upgrade immediately through Seatfrog’s ‘buy it now’ option, even if they’ve booked through a third party.

Customers who successfully bid on a First Class ticket will be able to enjoy all the benefits of Virgin Trains’ First Class experience, including complimentary food and drink, additional legroom and the First Class lounge.

Sarah Copley, Executive Director, Commercial, at Virgin Trains, said: “This is a great opportunity for our customers who fancy treating themselves at the last minute.

“This new partnership with Seatfrog is another example of our strong record in innovation – giving customers a unique chance to enjoy our First Class experience, which includes complimentary food and drink served by our amazing on board teams from our award winning menu.”

Iain Griffin, Co-Founder and CEO of Seatfrog, said: “At Seatfrog we're all about taking people's journey beyond the ordinary and making it something special.

“Our partnership with Virgin Trains is just the latest stop as we rapidly expand across the UK and Europe, giving more travellers the opportunity to upgrade their trip."

Last minute upgrades will be available on selected Virgin Trains’ west coast services for business and leisure travellers.

For more information see <https://www.virgintrains.co.uk/seatfrog>

**\*APP TERMS & CONDITIONS –**

* Any customer who is 18 years and over, and has booked a standard advance ticket is eligible to take part in a Seatfrog auction, with more ticket types coming soon
* Customer can participate by simply entering their booking reference or by picking the train they are travelling on via Seatfrog’s simple trip selector.
* There is no limit to how many bids you can place in an auction
* Seatfrog will be available seven days a week across the entire Virgin Trains network – excluding journeys to Chester and North Wales. Bank holidays are excluded.
* Seatfrog upgrades are only valid when presented in conjunction with a valid ticket for travel
* An upgrade will only ever be available if there are empty seats in First Class carriages. The number of seats available in each auction depends on how busy the train is, and how many First Class tickets are left on that journey.
* The app is approved by Apple and available from the App Store for iOS and Google Play for Android.
* Seatfrog only asks for payment details if you want to make a bid or buy it now – you are free to check out the seat and make your mind up
* No other offers or discounts can be applied

**About Virgin Trains**

Stagecoach and Virgin are working in partnership to operate the West Coast inter-city route under the Virgin Trains brand, revolutionising travel on one of the UK’s key rail arteries.

The network connects some of the nation’s most iconic destinations including Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester and London.

Virgin Trains is committed to delivering a high speed, high frequency service, offering shorter journey times, more comfortable travel and excellent customer service. Customers consistently rate Virgin Trains ahead of other long-distance rail franchise operators in the National Rail Passenger Survey (NRPS) commissioned by industry watchdog, Transport Focus.

Virgin Trains has a proud record of challenging the status quo - from introducing tilting Pendolino trains, to a pioneering automated delay repay scheme, introducing the industry-leading onboard entertainment streaming service, BEAM, and becoming the first franchised rail operator to offer m-Tickets for all ticket types.

Virgin Trains operated the East Coast route between March 1, 2015 and June 24, 2018. In that time, we invested £75m to create a more personalised travel experience, including over £40m in the existing fleet. Customers have benefitted from 48 additional services between Edinburgh and London every week, and an extra 22 Saturday services between Leeds and London – a total of 1.74 million additional seats since May 2015.

Working together, the partnership railway of the public and private sectors has published a long-term plan, called *In Partnership for Britain’s Prosperity,* to change and improve Britain’s railway. The plan will secure almost £85bn of additional economic benefits to the country whilst enabling further investment and improvement, and contains four commitments which will see rail companies: strengthen our economic contribution to the country; improve customers’ satisfaction; boost the communities we serve; and, create more and better jobs in rail. For more information go to [Britain Runs on Rail](http://www.britainrunsonrail.co.uk/?gclid=CjwKCAiAr_TQBRB5EiwAC_QCq9OA-y_Al1Voo4ZvYjMvSBs86kuvjZLD8MfFvnOUU9UeVZ1T5CObLRoCasIQAvD_BwE).

Visit the Virgin Trains Media Room - [virgintrains.co.uk/about/media-room](http://mediaroom.virgintrains.co.uk/) - for the latest news, images and videos. Subscribe [here](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/follow/47939) for regular news from Virgin Trains.

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**About Seatfrog**

Seatfrog is a travel technology company, helping rail providers across the globe unlock new ancillary revenue opportunities through the use of its world-leading mobile upgrade platform. Seatfrog’s platform allows passengers to transparently bid for an upgrade in real time, as well as pay and receive a new boarding pass directly to their mobile right up until departure. Fully automated, Seatfrog’s platform can be integrated into any system in weeks. Enabling rail providers to quickly deliver a more enhanced experience to their customers, resulting in their passengers having access to a smoother, more comfortable experience. With Seatfrog, no-one need settle for ordinary.

For more information, visit [seatfrog.com](http://seatfrog.com/) or find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/SeatFrog/)  or [Twitter](https://twitter.com/Seatfrog)

For Seatfrog press images or interview requests please contact seatfrog@hopeandglorypr.com