

SHOW TIME



Inside the latest
news, milestones &
highlights from first
direct bank arena



Record-breaking events

Community partnerships

**Team recognition
& rewards**

What's coming next



Jason Derulo
February 2026

Welcome to the latest first direct bank arena stakeholder newsletter.

As we move through another exciting period for the venue, we are pleased to share news of recent achievements, upcoming events, and the many ways the arena continues to support Leeds' vibrant cultural scene. Thank you for your continued partnership and support, which enables us to bring unforgettable live experiences to audiences while driving positive social and economic impact across the city and region.

Alex Warren, American singer and songwriter who's worldwide hit 'Ordinary' reached global phenomenon in 2025 described first direct bank arena as the best venue he has been to as he could see ALL the audience.



Some of the artists that have visited the arena in 2026 so far!

“IT’S MORE THAN A VENUE”

Martin McNulty
General Manager,
first direct bank arena



Youngblud
April 2026



Martin McNulty
General Manager,
first direct bank arena

Every time I walk into first direct bank arena, I’m reminded just how special this place is. It’s more than a venue – it’s where people come together to celebrate, make memories and experience something unforgettable. Whether it’s a sold-out concert, a family enjoying their first live show, or a community event that brings people together, there’s a real sense of pride in being part of those moments.

What makes me especially proud is the role the arena plays in Leeds. We welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, helping to bring energy, opportunity and investment into the city, while showcasing Leeds on a national and international stage. But beyond the numbers, it’s about the atmosphere, the excitement and the

sense of community that these events create. None of this would be possible without the incredible people behind it all – our dedicated team, our partners, stakeholders and everyone who supports the arena. Their passion and commitment to delivering world-class guest experiences are what make this venue such a success.

Thank you for being part of our story. I’m excited about what lies ahead and look forward to continuing to create amazing memories for our guests while making a positive difference to the city we all care so much about.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Partner Spotlight shines a light on the organisations and individuals who help make first direct bank arena a success. In each edition, we catch up with one of our valued partners to learn more about their work, their connection to the arena and their ambitions for the future.



Sam Gunn
Senior Marketing
Manager, AXS

Q: What does your organisation do?

A: AXS is the Official Ticketing Partner for first direct bank arena Leeds, which means AXS is the official place to get tickets for first direct bank arena Leeds shows.

Globally, AXS powers ticketing and access to more than 1600 of the world's most iconic venues, sports teams, festivals, and global tours. In the UK, we provide the ticketing for Roundhay Park in Leeds, The O2, Utilita Arena Newcastle, York Barbican, bp pulse live Birmingham, British Summer Time at Hyde Park, All Points East, among many others.

Q: Why did you choose to partner with first direct bank arena?

A: AXS is committed to creating secure, seamless and fan-focused ticketing experiences, and Leeds has a thriving live entertainment scene. first direct bank arena attracts established global artists as well as emerging talent, so the opportunity to support the venue and help connect more fans with memorable live experiences was a natural fit for us.

Q: What has been your standout arena moment?

A: What I love about the arena is that it has a completely different feel to every other arena in the UK because of the unique shape. In my experience, there's no bad spot to watch a show – it feels like you're part of a wall of fans directly across from the stage, with great views throughout.

I was lucky enough to see Fontaines D.C. at the venue in December 2024. It felt like a band that was reaching a new level, blending a raw energy with refined songwriting and an incredibly passionate fanbase. It may sound like an oxymoron but I've never been to another venue that feels so intimate, despite sharing that moment with 12,000 other fans.

Q: What impact has the partnership had on your organisation?

A: AXS has been operating in the UK for 15 years now, and we've steadily expanded our reach and operations over that time. Working with fdba Leeds has strengthened our presence across the North. We have built a successful relationship with a great team at the venue, and it has also supported broader opportunities in the region. For example, we've been able to be part of the Roundhay Park shows as AXS

continues to establish a stronger presence in and around Leeds.

Q: What's next for your business?

A: We've welcomed a number of great new UK clients over the past few years, including Connexin Live in Hull and York Barbican. Seeing the positive response to AXS at those venues has been exciting, but we know we must continue working hard to help fans access tickets safely and fairly. Protecting fans from bots and other bad actors remains an ongoing challenge, and we'll continue working to help ensure fans can access tickets for the shows they love.

Q: What does Leeds mean to you?

A: I love Leeds. It's a beautiful city with a rich history, full of incredible people who work hard, party hard, and don't suffer fools. I grew up not too far from Leeds and am often in the city for gigs, to support the mighty Leeds United, or just to grab a beer (shout out to the Brudenell, Duck & Drake, and Whitelocks Ale House here!). I'm also really excited to be heading to the Highland Laddie in a few weeks for some food – it'll be my first visit and another Leeds institution I've heard great things about. I'm incredibly proud to be the Leeds representative for the wider AXS team.



Rick Astley
April 2026

rockstar of the month

At first direct bank arena, we celebrate colleagues who go above and beyond through our Rockstar of the Month programme. Each month, team members nominate and vote for a colleague who has exemplified one of our core values — Leadership, Execution or Growth — recognising those who make an outstanding contribution to our team, our visitors and the success of the venue.

If you want to work with an amazing team in a iconic venue check out our current job roles: www.firstdirectbankarena.com/about/careers

OUR MOST RECENT ROCKSTAR WINNERS INCLUDE:

JANUARY ROCK STAR OF THE MONTH



CHARLOTTE FISH
PREMIUM TEAM

“Charlotte has proven to be a key member of the Premium team in a short space of time. She has taken hold of the role and made it her own delivering events with ease (or what appears to be with ease)”

FEBRUARY ROCK STAR OF THE MONTH



CHARLIE FIRTH
F&B RETAIL MANAGER

“Charlie impacts not only F&B but fundamentally the profits, profile and running of the arena – a positive influence - she must have lots of versions of her as she is everywhere on a show”

MARCH ROCKSTAR OF THE MONTH



STEVE BURNETT
SECURITY MANAGER

“Steve is consistently willing to help any team within the area. He is a valuable source of knowledge. As an individual, he often flies under the radar and should be acknowledged for everything he does.”

APRIL ROCKSTAR OF THE MONTH



BOBBY STREETLY
EVENTS CREW MANAGER

“Their role sits at the heart of every event and their reliability, precision and pragmatic approach to getting things done is commendable. He operates in a high-pressure environment where things simply have to work (the show must go on, quite literally) – he does this without noise, without fuss and without seeking recognition.”

MAY ROCKSTAR OF THE MONTH



VINNEL ANDERSON
CLEANING MANAGER

“Vinnel is a great person to bring you back down to earth when things get on top of you, and remind you of the important things in life”

JUNE ROCKSTAR OF THE MONTH



VAUGHAN HIRST
DIGITAL MARKETING EXEC

“Vaughan is a huge talent to the venue; he has recently been working on a few premium projects which included pulling lots of pieces of a puzzle together. He just quietly gets on with it and hits the mark every time”

ACCESS ALL ARENAS

The first direct bank arena is part of **Legends Global**, the world's leading live experiences company. Across our UK portfolio, we operate eight iconic venues, delivering unforgettable events and premium experiences nationwide.



Introducing Access All Arenas

Access All Arenas is an exclusive premium hospitality fund designed for forward-thinking businesses looking to offer VIP experiences with a difference. Whether you're entertaining clients, rewarding employees, building business relationships, or creating memorable experiences for your team, Access All Arenas opens the door to the very best in live entertainment.

With unrivalled access across our portfolio, members can enjoy:

- Access to 8 cities across the UK
- Entry to 33 premium hospitality spaces
- Opportunities to attend more than 800 shows each year

Where else can one membership unlock so many incredible live experiences?

For more information, contact:
hospitality@firstdirectbankarena.com.

1. go Arena

2. first direct bank arena

3. utilita arena SHEFFIELD

4. Vaillant LIVE

5. connexin LIVE

6. utilita arena NEWCASTLE

7. J&J LIVE

8. DVC ARENA WEMBLEY

ARENA CHARITY PARTNERSHIPS



Child Friendly Leeds

The arena recently sponsored the Child Friendly Leeds Awards, which celebrated the incredible achievements of children, young people, and the organisations that support them across our city.

The evening was filled with inspiring stories of resilience, creativity, leadership and community spirit, highlighting the amazing impact that young people are making every day in Leeds. It was a privilege to be part of an event that shines a spotlight on those helping to make Leeds the best city for children and young people to grow up in. Congratulations to all the nominees, finalists and winners – your achievements are truly inspiring.



Supporting Hospitality Through Invisible Chips

As part of our commitment to corporate social responsibility, first direct bank arena is proud to support Invisible Chips, an initiative from Hospitality Action that helps hospitality workers facing hardship. By giving visitors the option to add a small donation to their food and drink purchases, we have raised over £1,000 in just three months, helping to provide vital financial and wellbeing support to people across the hospitality industry.

The success of the initiative in Leeds has been so significant that Invisible Chips has now been rolled out across all Legends Global arenas in the UK, extending its impact and helping even



more hospitality workers nationwide. This simple initiative allows our guests to give back to the people behind the experiences they enjoy, while demonstrating the positive difference that can be achieved when venues, visitors and industry partners come together to support a great cause.

Earlier in the year, we held our second Dinner on the Stage, where we wined and dined key people from across Leeds. In return, we asked all attendees to bring a 'tin of something'. This was then donated to Leeds Northwest Foodbank. The food collected on the night provided for over 270 people.

Up & coming shows until the end of 2026

More shows still to be announced.

Don't Miss a Beat, sign up now to be the first to know about pre sale.



Evanescence
8 September 2026

Jane McDonald
26 September 2026

The Rock Orchestra
1 October 2026

The Pussycat Dolls
2 October 2026

Westlife
6 October 2026

**The World of
Hans Zimmer**
8 October 2026

Professor Brian Cox
10 October 2026

Duran Duran
24 October 2026

**Steve Backshall's
Deadly Live**
25 October 2026

Korn
26 October 2026

**Suede & Manic
Street Preachers**
30 October 2026

Paul Heaton
31 October 2026

Courteeners
6 November 2026

Myles Smith
8 November 2026

The Script
10 November 2026

Don Toliver
18 November 2026

Kevin Bridges
19 November 2026

Squeeze
20 November 2026

Jungle
21 November 2026

Bill Bailey
28 November 2026

Bryson Tiller
4 December 2026

**Pete Tong
Ibiza Classics**
5 December 2026

**UB40 ft.
Ali Campbell**
8 December 2026

The Darkness
9 December 2026

Culture Club
12 December 2026

Man in the Mirror
18 December 2026

Morrissey
19 December 2026



Buy tickets online:
firstdirectbankarena.com