

FIRST DIRECT LEEDS ARENA

SFS intec



SFS intec's specialist fastening systems have been used to secure the striking new shingled, multi-coloured, metal façade on the First Direct Leeds Arena, resulting in significantly reduced fixing times, keeping the project on its critical time line.

The cladding of the newly completed venue comprises 6,000 square metres of aluminium shingles in five different colours, which was installed in layers onto stainless steel clips and held in place using 35,000 of SFS intec's aluminium bulb-tite rivets.

In addition, 3,000 self-drilling, SL3/2 fasteners were supplied to fix the perforated, aluminium mesh rainscreen panels to the structural backing wall. 7,000 low profile, Irius fasteners were also used to fix Kalzip's system, Kal-Plank, at the rear of the building. The design and construction is targeting a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating.

Craig Winstanley, technical advisor at SFS intec, commented: "We specified our austenitic stainless steel SL3/2 fasteners, to fix Top Hats onto the outside of the structural backing wall. By not having to drill these panels for bulb-tite rivet application, the contractor saved considerable installation time. Furthermore, the SL3-/2 fastener also provides the same pull out strength as our bulb-tite rivets, and will not strip out threads with the thin skin of the structural panels.

"A poor conductor of heat, austenitic stainless steel is also non-corrosive with aluminium, unlike many other steels – an aspect that was hugely important for guaranteeing a long-lasting, aesthetic finish of the facade."

Howard Preston, design manager at Lakesmere, said: "All systems specified for installation at the arena were chosen for their ability to be installed quickly, while guaranteeing a high performance fixing which is hard wearing against corrosion - essential when ensuring a long lasting, visual design. We specified the fasteners from SFS intec specifically for their durable qualities, ability to work harmoniously with the stainless steel clip and also for their low profile, discreet head designs."

The result provides a spectacular display surface for the coloured lighting which transforms the exterior façade at night by reflecting the mood of the concert within. The 13,000 capacity concert venue features an impressive uninterrupted interior construction, designed to allow all seats perfect sight-lines to the stage. The complex 3,500 ton steel structure was topped out by a 45 metre long proscenium beam spanning the width of the building.

Headed up by Leeds City Council, the £60 million project has been completed in 96 weeks. As well as improved job prospects, the City of Leeds anticipates an increased economy with the arena expected to bring in approximately £25.5 million, per year.



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