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PRESS RELEASE

CHEMUK 2026 puts regulation, resilience and innovation at the heart of the UK chemicals industry

London, May 2026: CHEMUK 2026 brought together the chemicals, process engineering and formulated product sectors at the NEC Birmingham on May 20 and 21, welcoming thousands of professionals from across the UK and international supply chains. Across two packed days, the show spotlighted the technologies, policies and partnerships shaping the future of UK chemicals. With senior representatives from Defra and the Health and Safety Executive taking to the stage alongside global manufacturers, trade bodies and technical specialists, this year's event placed regulatory policy and industrial strategy firmly at the centre of discussion.

With more than 600 exhibitors and over 150 speakers and panellists across five dedicated show zones, this year's edition delivered one of the event's most comprehensive conference programmes to date.

A defining theme was navigating regulatory change and challenges. Sessions led by Hibiscus's Andrew Bedford examined dangerous goods safety advisers (DGSA) compliance and best practice in dangerous goods handling and transport, while the Chemical Hazards Communication Society discussed the importance of accurate classification and effective hazard communication, and the key changes proposed to the CLP regulations. These topics remain critical as companies work to keep products moving safely and legally through increasingly complex UK and international supply chains.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were another major focus, with Dr Martyn Shenton of Blue Frog Scientific discussing UK regulation, Environment Agency thresholds and the Defra PFAS Plan. The subject gained further weight during the UK Government Briefing, where Defra Minister Emma Hardy MP set out a more proportionate and internationally aligned approach to chemicals regulation, including plans to use EU decisions as the starting point for UK REACH where appropriate.

Industry resilience and competitiveness also ran through the programme. Tim Doggett of the Chemical Business Association delivered the State of the Nation keynote and contributed to sessions on sector recognition and the changing global order's impact on chemical supply chains. Meanwhile, UK-ASCM explored growth, investment and sustainable supply chains, reflecting the urgent need to strengthen UK capability and attract long-term investment.

Sustainability and decarbonisation were equally prominent. The British Adhesives and Sealants Association's (BASA) Lorna Williams discussed adhesives, sealants, digitisation and electrification, while other panel discussions examined financing net-zero capital projects and carbon performance, product carbon footprints, clean energy and bio-based materials. For an industry under pressure to cut emissions without compromising performance or productivity, these sessions showed how commercial and environmental priorities are becoming increasingly connected.

Innovation was another core strand. CPI's Jude Huggan and Jenny Readman addressed bio-based innovation and the challenge of moving R&D into commercial reality, while Innovate UK Business Connect's Chris Hawkins explored the UK chemicals innovation ecosystem, including funding, strategy and scale-up support.

"This year's show demonstrated the strength, resilience and ambition of the UK chemicals sector at a pivotal moment for industry," said Adam Gough, portfolio director at Easyfairs. "Across two days, we brought together regulators, manufacturers, innovators and supply chain leaders to address the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of chemicals in the UK. From regulatory reform and sustainability to investment and industrial competitiveness, the quality of discussion and collaboration across the event showed a sector focused on delivering long-term growth and innovation."

The show's success was highlighted with 65 per cent of this year's exhibitors rebooking for 2027, and an attendance of 5,200 attendees across the chemicals supply chain.

"CHEMUK has become the leading event for the UK chemical supply chain, bringing the entire industry together under one roof," said Tim Doggett, Chief Executive of the Chemical Business Association."

"Few events bring together manufacturers, distributors, logistics providers, SMEs and industry leaders from across the chemical supply chain in the way that CHEMUK does. In an increasingly uncertain world, where businesses are navigating supply chain disruption, geopolitical pressures and economic volatility, the value of face-to-face collaboration has never been greater."

"CHEMUK creates an environment where partnerships are built, ideas are shared and a strong sense of community is fostered across the chemical supply chain. It also provides a platform for the industry to speak with a stronger collective voice about the critical role chemicals play in powering the economy, driving innovation, enabling sustainability and underpinning almost every aspect of modern society."

CHEMUK 2027 will take place on 19 and 20 May. Companies already planning to exhibit at the UK's largest gathering of chemicals experts can register their interest by visiting the show's website.

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About ChemUK

ChemUK is the UK's largest B2B trade show supporting the chemicals, process engineering and formulated product industries.

The expo will present over 600 specialist exhibitors and more than 100 expert speaker sessions from across the entire chemical supply chain, split between five focused show zones; Chemicals Supply Zone, Chemicals Management Zone, Process & Chemical Engineering Zone, Chemicals Laboratory Zone, and Formulated Product Manufacture Zone. ChemUK is a must-attend event for the chemical and chemical product industry members.

About Easyfairs

Easyfairs organises and hosts events, bringing communities together to visit the future.

We currently organise 200 face-to-face events in 14 countries (Algeria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) and manage eight event venues in Belgium, the Netherlands and Sweden (Antwerp, Ghent, Mechelen-Brussels North, Namur, Gorinchem, Hardenberg, Malmö and Stockholm).

We are passionate about “easifying” the life of our customers and increasing the return on investment and return on time for professional communities through our all-in formulas, advanced technology and customer-centric approach. Our digital features and initiatives provide these communities with excellent opportunities to network effectively and do business throughout the year. We listen carefully to create compelling online formats that meet their constantly evolving needs.

The Easyfairs Group employs 700 highly committed talents, deploys the best marketing and technology tools, and develops brands with a strong appeal to our stakeholder communities.

The company is ranked 17th in the list of the world’s leading exhibition companies.

Visit the future with Easyfairs and find out more on www.easyfairs.com.

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