Industry comes together at Kew Gardens to mark 60 years of the HFMA

The natural health industry converged on Kew Gardens to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Health Food Manufacturers' Association (HFMA).

Kew Gardens was the perfect setting to mark the milestone, where guests enjoyed the sights and sounds before convening at the Nash Conservatory for a drinks reception, followed by dinner in The Orangery, with guest speakers and a chance to catch up with friends and colleagues. The team from *Health Food Business* was delighted to be in attendance.

As part of the event, a static exhibition highlighted key points and people from the last 60 years, from the inception of the organisation in 1965 by Maurice Hanssen and the founder members, Alfonal, Granose Foods, Heath & Heather, MCI Publishing, and W. Prewett. The display sparked many conversations when guests were reminded of some landmark moments, such as the 1968 Medicines Act, the Food Supplements Directive, Brexit, the B6 campaign, folic acid fortification and more. Some older photos highlighted personalities and activities; Dame Barbara Cartland visiting the Helfex trade exhibition in the early 1970s presented a perfect glimpse into past exhibitions.

Following a welcome by HFMA President, Penny Viner, the event featured guest speakers. Dr Bob Alkin, Programme Manager at Kew, gave a fascinating insight into the history of the botanical gardens and the scientific work at Kew, much of it linked to botanicals and herbal medicines. Dr Zubir Ahmed, MP for Glasgow South West, shared a passionate approach to encouraging the health of the nation, keeping people well through education about healthy diet and lifestyle. After dinner, HFMA Chair, Nick Bennett, welcomed TV gardener, author and Chartered Horticulturist, David Domoney, whose highly entertaining speech left guests in no doubt about the importance of the natural world to our wellbeing.

The HFMA also acknowledged and thanked the sponsors of the event without whom it would not have been the success it was.