

# Forum's focus on growth

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About 275 people attended the Connecting As We Grow Community Forum in Wanaka last week.

Organised by the Wanaka Community Board and Link Upper Clutha, the forum hosted speakers such as Queenstown Lakes Mayor Jim Boulton and deputy mayor Calum MacLeod, and showed videos of successful community projects in the region.

Link Upper Clutha facilitator Kathy Dedo said the evening covered the implications of growth within the community.

Council projections indicated Wanaka would be two and a-half times its current size by 2058. It was "one thing to look at numbers on a graph," she said, but the evening helped put the statistics into context by discussing planning and what was required to support the population increase.

The evening gave people an insight into the council's planning process in preparation for the development of Wanaka's 10-year growth plan, which would be carried out over the coming months.

"Essentially that's the business plan and budget for the next 10 years."

She said it was important for the community to be involved in the planning process.

"Council has a role but the community has a role as well."

Link would now collate the feedback and data collected on the night and share it with the Wanaka Community Board, she said.

There were 32 stalls set up for the interactive expo on the night, which was designed to encourage people to get to know one another and showcase groups within the region.

"This was our community at its best . . . engaged, energetic, contributing ideas. It really was a great atmosphere."