



Photo credit: Nikki Heath *The Wanaka Sun*

## Connecting our community

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LINK Upper Clutha is taking steps to upskill people to communicate better within their networks and across the community with its upcoming seminar, Get Dotted.

LINK facilitator Kathy Dedo said better communication is what it will take to retain what is special about Wanaka as it grows, and to work together to face the region's growth challenges.

"It gets to the essence of what LINK is trying to do – enable our community to connect and address its own issues in order to be successful."

In a short time, Wanaka has grown from a small town with good communication between its sectors because everyone knew each other, to a town with a much bigger population which requires a different skillset to communicate well about the big issues.

Kathy said we now have to work harder to communicate outside the usual paths we take in the course of our jobs, families or volunteer work.

"One of the unique things about Get Dotted is that it creates a simple, common language to understand both our own strengths and how we're different from others around us," Kathy said.

The workshop helps community groups whose boards or committees need to work together, often without much resource, to accomplish their specific goals. It appeals to individuals who want to understand their partners or kids better, and to businesses

because they can see the potential for a more productive workplace.

In 2016, LINK identified more than 200 community groups and services in the Upper Clutha, which indicates there are lots of passionate people doing amazing things.

"But those groups, especially when working in similar areas of interest, often compete for both people and money," Kathy said.

"If the people involved were better equipped to understand each other's motivations and perspectives they are more likely to collaborate."

Improved collaboration between groups is already happening. In recent months, the Wanaka Sun has reported on the merger of two water groups to form the Upper Clutha Lakes Trust, as well as a memorandum of understanding signed by Queenstown and Wanaka Chambers of Commerce, and the two towns' tourist boards committing to formalise their collaboration.

Kathy said to solve the big picture issues we have to work together across our natural segments.

"Get Dotted isn't a silver bullet, but every little bit of support helps and this is a fantastic way to improve communication and understanding both within teams and across our community."

Amy Scott will present Get Dotted on Wednesday June 20 and Thursday June 21, at the Lake Wanaka Centre, with tickets available online, from Community Networks or email [info@link.org.nz](mailto:info@link.org.nz) for group bookings.