



Plenty to cheer about . . . Kahu Youth representatives celebrate the news a proposal to shift "The Crib" to larger premises has been approved by the Queenstown Lakes District Council. They are (back from left) Jarrod Still (16), Kahu Youth Trust chairwoman Kim Tomlin, youth workers Richard Elvey and Angela Griffiths, Manami Yagyu (17), Aaron Blackledge (19), Rob Harper (15), Luke Sanders (13), (front, from left) Bradley Matthews (14), Samantha Haines (13) and Finn Fairbairn (14).

PHOTO: LUCY IBBOTSON

>Wanaka

Bigger premises for Kahu Youth

BY LUCY IBBOTSON

SUPPORTERS of Wanaka's Kahu Youth group will have all the more reason to celebrate when they take to the streets this evening for the annual Wanakafest street parade and party after learning their bid to shift to bigger premises has been successful.

The Kahu Youth Trust's application for consent to convert the former Wanaka Physiotherapy building at 11 Russell St into a youth venue has been approved by the Queenstown Lakes District Council.

News of the new venue came amid preparations for this weekend's Kahu Youth-run festivities, being held as part of Wanakafest.

New premises were needed because increased participation in local youth programmes had created space problems at the present venue, The Crib, located beneath the Cinema Paradiso building in Ardmore St, where the trust has run its programmes since 2009.

Trust chairwoman Kim Tomlin said everyone associated with Kahu Youth was "super excited" about the new premises, which

would double the space available for activities.

Youth worker Richard Elvey was "over the moon" consent had been approved after nearly two years spent trying to secure a new venue.

"It's been a long, long, hard road but we've got there — we've finally got a proper long-term home," he said.

"And it gives us room to grow even more," fellow youth worker Angela Griffiths added.

News of the pending move has been welcomed by Wanaka's young people, too.

"It will be so cool. We'll actu-

ally have a cool place to meet [a dedicated education room] that's not real noisy," Luke Sanders (13) said.

Samantha Haines (13) was looking forward to shifting to the new venue as it "won't be so cramped", while having room to play pool properly was a selling point for Jarrod Still (16).

The new youth venue will feature office space for two youth workers, a lounge-kitchen space, an education room and an activities room. Relocation will happen before the Christmas school holidays, when funding for rent has been secured.