

Liberty Trust moves on

By Aaron Ironside

Whakatane-based Liberty Trust says it is time to "move on" from the decision by the Charities Commission to decline an application for charitable status.

Trust chairman Kelvin Deal was "astonished by the Charities Commission decision", but says the ministry is now looking ahead.

He says that not having the charitable status "makes no difference at all" and that "after all the research, letter writing and lawyers I realise we can't go on like this — we've got to look to the future."

"Next year we will be moving forward. We've loaned 267 mortgages, currently about two a month," said Mr Deal.

Liberty Trust recently celebrated their 21st birthday and the lending of \$20 million interest-free.

Begun by the Whakatane Baptist and Liberty Life Churches in 1989, Liberty Trust provides free-of-charge budget assistance to

the public; free Bible teaching regarding stewardship, interest-free lending and giving; and helping each other.

Mr Deal described the beginnings of the ministry as a "miracle" but admits when he first heard about it he was "highly sceptical and quite negative about it".

"Then I started looking and seeing what the Bible said."

Mr Deal believes that in the current economic climate, they "were made for such a time as this".

"It's bad news for New Zealand in that interest rates are going up, but it's good as far as God's plan is concerned."

He says the ministry is now seeing fruit that crosses the generations.

"Parents are teaching the Bible principles to their children and following up with a practical application.

"We are helping all these people and they are helping each other and together we are building something that is doing wonderful things for God." ■