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Lions president Keith Harris and Wenceslas appeal chairman Barbara Wright, with committee members Jim Lawson and Mike Thom, the CAB's Sally Cowper and Holly Nason, Tennyson's Sure Start Children's Centre's Marylin Delloyde with Santa and Haslemere Mayor Penny Bradley. (HD46-356-14)

Wenceslas looks out on fuel debt

PROJECT Wenceslas steps out again in Haslemere this winter, with the Lions club launching a campaign to keep people warm by wiping out fuel debt and relieving fuel poverty.

The Herald is sponsoring the project and in this week's paper you will find a leaflet detailing how you can donate to Project Wenceslas.

Haslemere Mayor Penny Bradley helped launch the 2014 Project Wenceslas last week along with representatives of the Lions, Citizen's Advice Bureau CAB and Tennyson Sure-Start Centre.

Lions spokesman Michael Thom said: "Last year Farnham Lions linked up with the Haslemere CAB and Sure Start to run Haslemere's own version of their Wenceslas project. In doing so we raised £4,300. Now we are repeating the exercise in 2014."

The project works by inviting better-off pensioners, who may not need their winter fuel payment, to pass on the allowance via the Lions charity to those in serious need.

This year it is hoped to raise between £6-7,000 from generous residents in the town. For the sec-

ond year in Haslemere - and the third in Farnham - the money will be used to clear all the fuel debt cases on the lists of the local CABs and also to make a large number of discretionary grants of up to £100 to families identified as in real need, Mr Thom explained.

"Haslemere CAB's fuel debt register currently totals over £4,000 and the Sure Start and food bank organisations have also identified many deserving cases," he said.

"The Lions believe that once again we can significantly assist in resolving these situations and

ensure the funds will be entirely spent on fuel."

Recipients remain totally anonymous as money will go via Waverley CAB to poorer pensioners, and others in need.

The funds are used to pay off people's fuel debt paid directly to the energy supply companies or their payment cards topped up.

"This is a way of giving the winter fuel allowance to a charity and it is in line with the aim of the government's fuel payments," Mr Thom added. "People think that poorer areas such as Aldershot, for example, have a problem but they

don't think that Haslemere has a problem too."

Mayor Penny Bradley added: "Haslemere Town Council will help in any way that we can - there are people in the town who need this help."

The town council is also helping to distribute the leaflets, including posting them on noticeboards around the area.

Other Lions clubs in the South have followed Farnham Lions' example with Wenceslas projects of their own. Donations can also be given at www.justgiving.com/lions-wenceslas