



# Phoebe's plight touches hearts

A SEVERELY disabled girl has been given more than £300 worth of specially adapted toys, thanks to the fundraising efforts of a Hertfordshire-based Freemasons lodge.

Phoebe Hatcher, 12, of Hillcommon near Taunton, who suffers from cerebral palsy in all four limbs and is wheelchair-bound, came to the attention of The Lodge of Tranquillity after her physiotherapist wrote to them about her condition.

Steward of The Lodge Michael Harris was so touched by her plight that he asked his 30 fellow Lodge members to join him in contributing to a fund for her.

The Lodge, which raises money for various causes and holds special fundraising meetings four times a year, collected £330 for the young girl.

Mr Harris said: "When we read the letter from Phoebe's mother it touched our hearts.

"We normally raise about £100 at our Lodge meetings but my fellow Lodge members and I were so touched by Phoebe's story that we

managed to raise much more than that."

The money has now been used to buy a selection of toys that have been adapted so that Phoebe can operate them with a specially adapted switch.

The toys include a blue fibre optic lamp, a bubble-making machine and a Dalmatian.

Phoebe's mum and dad, Karl and Gill Hatcher, are delighted, and Karl said: "The toys really seem to be making a difference to Phoebe.

"We would like to thank Lifeline 4 Kids, the Lodge of Tranquillity, Phoebe's physios and everyone who helped with the fundraising to give Phoebe a great opportunity to play independently and to access new toys that improve her co-ordination.

"And, of course, a very big thank you to Michael Harris for thinking about Phoebe's enjoyment and development."

■ PICTURED: Phoebe Hatcher and her father Karl Hatcher surrounded by some of the new toys.

