

## **Going green at the Furnace**

The historic Moira Furnace Museum has taken a step into the future by purchasing advanced electric hand tools with the help of the SHIRE Environment Grant from Leicestershire County Council. Initial reactions from the Museum's volunteers have been extremely positive.

Set in the heart of the National Forest, Moira Furnace is a museum of industrial history and a 36-acre country park. With such a large area comes a responsibility to manage it. With a mixture of grass and park land, woodland, wetland and pockets of heathland, they rely on a small army of volunteers and the power of petrol mowers, hedge trimmers and strimmers to help maintain the area for both wildlife and visitors.

Thanks to a 50% SHIRE Environment Grant, the Moira Furnace have managed to replace their walk behind mower, hedge trimmers and 2 strimmers with high end battery powered equivalents. They have also been able to keep some of the better petrol tools for reserve and sell on the older equipment to help cover some of the cost of the match funding. In all, they have not just replaced the old kit but removed the need to buy petrol and reduce their carbon footprint.

This has made the job of looking after their slice of the National Forest greener and safer for the volunteers. The equipment is lighter, easier and safer than the petrol tools and provides the opportunity for more volunteers to develop their skills and participate with these activities giving volunteers a sense of pride, purpose and place within the community, feeling they have contributed positively to the site, so all can enjoy. This has had a very positive impact on volunteer's mental health and physical wellbeing.

The Trust now look forward to seeing just how much they save on buying fuel which will then help them work out the amount of carbon dioxide they have prevented from being released into the atmosphere over the coming growing season. The Trust would like to thank the council for this grant and making it possible and welcome visitors to come down and see what they have achieved through this project. The country park is open all year round with the museum and boat trips running from April until October with plenty of events throughout the year!

For more information on the SHIRE Environment Grant please visit:

<https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/grants/environment-grant.html>

Photos sent by Moira Furnace Museum Trust Ltd of the purchased equipment operated by the volunteers.



