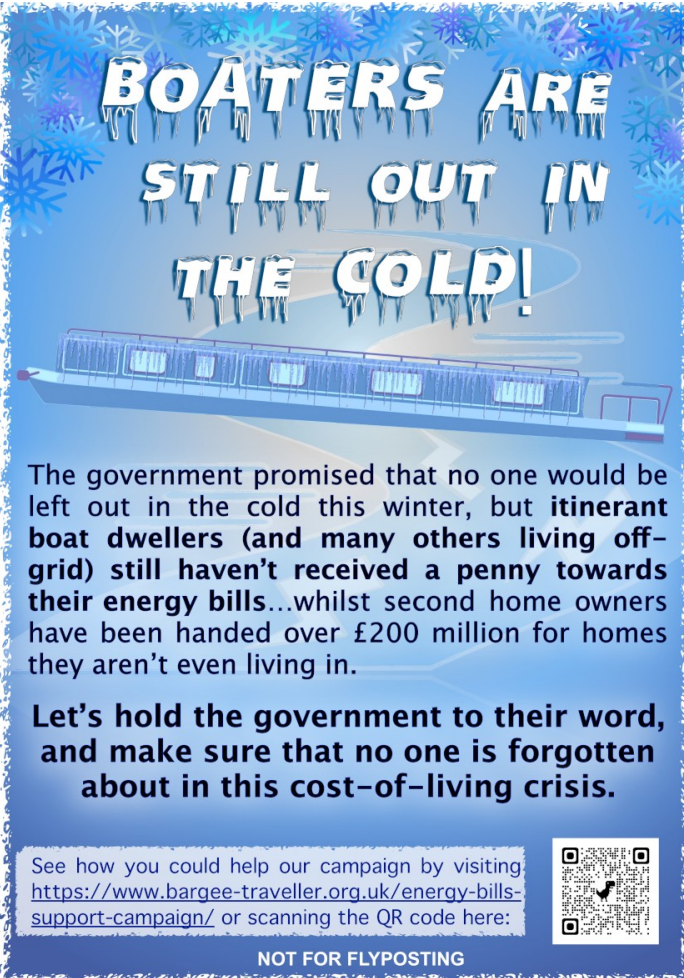


Energy Bill Support Scheme-Alternative Funding (“EBSS-AF”) (the “Energy Grant”) Guidance to Live-aboards with Moorings and Itinerant Boat-Dwellers for Making Applications

27-02-2023

National Bargee Travellers Association




**BOATERS ARE
STILL OUT IN
THE COLD!**

The government promised that no one would be left out in the cold this winter, but **itinerant boat dwellers (and many others living off-grid) still haven't received a penny towards their energy bills...**whilst second home owners have been handed over £200 million for homes they aren't even living in.

Let's hold the government to their word, and make sure that no one is forgotten about in this cost-of-living crisis.

See how you could help our campaign by visiting <https://www.bargee-traveller.org.uk/energy-bills-support-campaign/> or scanning the QR code here:



NOT FOR FLYPOSTING

1

INTRODUCTION

The Energy Bill Support Scheme was rolled out by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (“ESNZ”) (at the time called Business Energy and Industrial Strategy or “BEIS”) in May 2022. EBSS gave everyone in the country with an electricity meter a grant of £400 off their electricity bills. Boat-dwellers and other travellers were left out.

A second scheme (the Energy Bill Support Scheme – Alternative Funding or EBSS-AF) was announced in December 2022 allegedly for all “off-gridders” (thus including boat-dwellers with moorings without grid-metered electricity, and / or mail boxes, and itinerant boat-dwellers). EBSS-AF went live on 23-2-2023 although itinerant boat-dwellers were still left out. Itinerant boat dwellers (aka “continuous cruisers”) were informed that their eligibility was “under review” but are at present excluded from applying.

Some people with moorings equipped with private electricity hook-ups are supposed to receive a discount from the landlord under “pass-through” legislation. If so you should not make an application for EBSS-AF as you should be receiving the discount in the form of a reduced bill from your landlord. The NBTA has become aware that some landlords are not doing this, in breach of the Energy Prices Act 2022. The advice of the Government is to take the landlord to court which is obviously a non-starter. Therefore proceed with an application as signposted below.

A third scheme, “Alternative Fuel Payment” or AFP gives off-gridders who use coal, wood, LPG or bottled gas a further grant of £200 towards their fuel bills. More to follow in early March 2023.

This Guidance Note tells boaters with moorings how to apply for EBSS-AF and itinerant boat dwellers what to do next.

2

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Boaters with Moorings

It is assumed that boaters on Canal & River Trust (“CRT”) water who have a permanent mooring are licenced under s.17(3)(c)(i) of the British Waterways Act 1995. Assuming that you live on your boat and do not live in a house then your mooring is “residential” even if it does not have planning consent. For the avoidance of doubt Article 8 (“Art 8”) of the European Convention of Human Rights (“ECHR”) is engaged. This requires respect for home. In addition Article 1 of Protocol 1 (A1P1) is engaged (respect for property – the grant becomes property once the Government says that everyone is going to get it). In addition Article 14 is engaged (prohibition of discrimination – in this case classification “other”). Boaters on other water cannot claim to be licenced under s.17(3)(c)(i) but the same argument applies about the

mooring status. Proceed with the application process below. The application has to be done in a very specific way to clear through properly. Once you start the application (which is STEP 11) you can go back to STEP 11 but not earlier.

Itinerant Boat Dwellers.

It is assumed that boaters on Canal & River Trust (“CRT”) water who are itinerant are licenced under s.17(3)(c)(ii) of the British Waterways Act 1995 and are therefore described as “continuous cruisers” for the purposes of this application and are barred. Arts 8, 14 and A1P1 ECHR are engaged. Boaters on other water are licenced as appropriate or not at all as the case may be. Proceed with the application process below to STEP 9 then Paragraph 3. There is a Government phone helpline to call and they will take you through the form if you do not have internet access. Call 0808 175 3287 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm). You can also e-mail alternativefunding@ebss.beis.gov.uk

START HERE

Got to:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>

Read that lot. Ignore the bit that says “you can’t apply”. Scroll to the bottom. Click on the green “Start Now” button.

PRE-SCREEN

- STEP 1 Where do you live?
Click as appropriate
Continue

- STEP 2 Are you getting discounts...?
CHECK that the address that is on your bank statements isn't a residential address where the occupier is already getting EBSS. If so you will probably be rejected. See paragraph 3 below.
Click “no”
Continue

- STEP 3 Do you have a UK Bank Account?
Hopefully yes otherwise you will be rejected.
Continue

- STEP 4 Describe Where You Live
On a boat.
Continue

STEP 5 What Kind of Licence Does Your Boat Have?
Mooring user: "Permanent Residential Mooring Licence"
Itinerant boat dweller: click "Continuous Cruising Licence"
you may be booted at this point: proceed per STEP 9.
Continue

STEP 6 Find Your Address
This is the address that matches with your bank account (STEP 3)
Enter House number and Postcode
Continue

STEP 7 Is This Your Address?
It will put up one or more addresses. Note that you cant edit the address.
Pick the address that matches the bank account address.
Continue

STEP 8 Is This Your Main Home
select "yes"
Continue

STEP 9 Acknowledgement

Mooring user: ... hopefully... assume "You Can Apply For the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme Payment"
Click the green "Apply" button.
Only apply once. If you try to apply more than once (i.e. to get more than one grant as opposed to because the system failed you) then that would be fraudulent. Also DO NOT APPLY if you have a house with a grid-connected electricity meter and therefore will already be getting the EBSS.

Itinerant boat dweller: (assume rejection)
TAKE A SCREEN SHOT OF THIS PAGE (this is your "decision" for judicial review proceedings to take the Government to court).
Go to Section 3 below

APPLICATION

STEP 10 Are You Registered For Council Tax at the Address You're Applying For
Select "no"
Continue

STEP 11 You Need to Upload Proof of Address
There are several options but the address on the document must match the address on the bank account.
The file must be less than 10 Mbyte in size and in JPG, PNG or PDF format.

A driving licence is good, for example. It would be good to have two documents if you have them.

Click on “upload files” to start selecting a file, then upload, press the green tick for each one.

Finally click on the green “Continue” button

STEP 12 Are You Receiving and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or His Majesty’s revenue and Customs (HMRC) Benefits or Credits?
If you are, select “yes” otherwise “no”. If you provide this it is easier for the Spotlight system to identify you and clear you through.
Continue

STEP 13 What is Your Full Name
This is the name that appears on your evidence documents STEP 11 and any benefits / credits applications STEP 12. Put your name as it appears on the documents.
Continue

STEP 14 What is your Date of Birth?
Enter your date of birth
Continue

STEP 15 What is Your E-mail Address?
If you have one give it here – you will get an e-mail acknowledgement at the end and the local authority will communicate with you this way.
If you don’t have an e-mail click on “I do not have an e-mail address”
Continue

STEP 16 What is Your Phone Number
Provide this. This is the alternate way to STEP 15 for the local authority to reach you.
Continue

STEP 17 What are Your Bank Details
IMPORTANT this is where the money goes to, so don’t make a mistake – but it will be rejected if you do.
NAME MUST BE ONLY “first name” “last name”, no title, no initials, no second forename.
If the name isn’t in this format the application bounces with a message saying “we could not verify your bank account” and possibly “but it was close”.
If it is rejected click on “back” and check that the details are correct.
Continue

STEP 18 Check Your Answers Before Sending Your Application
If you get to this the details beforehand are acceptable.
Check over.
Click the checkbox "I confirm that these details are correct"
Take a screenshot or print to PDF.
Click the big green button.

STEP 19 Application Received
This confirms that the on-line application process is complete.
Take a screenshot or print to PDF.
The data is then sent to the local authority that corresponds to the address
STEP 3. They may contact you once the data gets to them. It can take up to
4 weeks to process. If the LA doesn't ask any questions the money is
transferred directly to your bank STEP 17.

3 IF YOU ARE REJECTED

If you are rejected you **MUST** take a screenshot / print to PDF of the page that has the rejection notice in it. This is not the same as the bank checking STEP 17 which should not fail if you get the name formatted correctly. This is the "decision".

IF you are eligible for Legal Aid then you should contact the Community Law Partnership (CLP) on 0121 685 8677 and explain to the Advice Team that you are seeking judicial review of the decision (that is why you need a screenshot of the Decision) to refuse you EBSS-AF when you are entitled to it. They will talk you through what to do next. Other law firms are available and the NBTA can signpost you as you need.

4 IF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY PURSUES YOU

Because you sign a declaration at STEP 18 that says that you have a "Permanent Residential Mooring" which might not have planning consent and / or you do not live at the c/o address used for your bank account the LA might accuse you of making a fraudulent application and pursue you. This is unlikely but you need to be prepared.

If this happens then the suggestion of the NBTA is to defend the case which becomes a judicial review (see paragraph 3) "by way of defence stated". The NBTA will signpost you to a criminal law defence lawyer as CLP do not work in the field of criminal law.

National Bargee Travellers Association
27th February 2023

**NBTA
BOATS ARE HOMES**

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