

## Welcome to your latest Biomass Suppliers List (BSL) newsletter

Please find the BSL July issue containing the latest news and updates on policy changes, statistics, and ongoing developments and improvements within the Scheme.

The BSL Administrator continues to **operate a full service**. Whether you require help with registration or updating your account, please continue to contact the BSL Helpdesk for assistance.

Please see the 'Coronavirus Update' section for the latest developments.

We always like to hear from you. If you have any feedback on this edition or ideas for future newsletters, please email [BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com](mailto:BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com).

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## Coronavirus Update

### Helpdesk Opening hours

We are continuing to run the usual BSL Helpdesk service (phonenumber open Monday – Friday from 10am – 2pm). Please send your enquiry to [BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com](mailto:BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com) and a response will be provided within five working days.

### Audits

Following the Government's advice we are now conducting site audits with the approval of suppliers. This will be reviewed in line with ongoing Government advice.

Please refer to the [Preparing for a BSL Desk-Based Audit](#) document for more information on desk audits.

## BSL Enquiry – COVID-19 – Impact on Biomass Supply Chains

The BSL Administrator has issued two COVID-19 surveys: one in April and a follow-up enquiry in May 2020, to assess the impact of Coronavirus on biomass supply chains and demand for biomass fuel. The second enquiry, which is now closed, enabled BSL suppliers to:

- Provide further detail on the key issues being experienced;
- Advise of how developments with the outbreak and the UK's response continue to impact biomass supply chains; and

- Explain how the ongoing situation is anticipated to impact biomass supply chains in the mid- and longer- terms.

181 responses were received to the second survey and these were discussed at the BSL Advisory Panel Meeting 15 on 24/06/20. The full results have been anonymised and shared with the UK Government and relevant industry trade associations. Where valuable, regional trends have also been considered.

Key points include:

- There was an overall positive response regarding the level of Government advice so far provided for both employers and employees.
- The majority of respondents stated they believed there would overall be no impact on demand for woodfuel.
- Responses suggest the abnormal weather and associated demand patterns will have more of an impact than Coronavirus on both demand for and supply of biomass.
- Respondents provided overall positive responses regarding the usefulness of the Government's support provisions applied for.

**Thank you to everyone who completed the survey and provided their feedback on this key issue.**

The BSL Panel will continue to monitor the ongoing situation and assess the value in issuing a further enquiry towards the end of the year, depending on how Winter demand and supply is appearing to be impacted.

## Q2 2020 - Quarterly Reports and Membership Fees now due

Quarterly reporting is now due for Q2 2020 (relevant to Producer-Traders, Producers and Traders). To ensure your authorised fuels continue to be included on the BSL, you are required to submit your quarterly reporting data and/or pay your membership fees.

**If you haven't done so already**, for Producer-Traders, Producers and Traders, please submit the total amount of woodfuel sold between 01/04/2020 and 31/06/2020 for each of your approved fuels on the BSL.

Firstly, [click here](#) to log in to your BSL account in the 'Registered Suppliers' section of the BSL website. Then, click on the quarterly reminder, 'Quarterly Report is now due'.

If you do not complete these activities on time, your BSL authorised fuels will be removed and your BSL number(s) will no longer be valid for claiming Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) payments.

Should you have any problems with submitting your payments, please do not hesitate to call or email our helpdesk.

Please note that we are currently still accepting cheque payments, however it will take around two weeks for the payment to be processed. The BSL Administrator is reviewing this process regularly.

## Using the correct Invoice Reference Number for BACs payment

When completing Quarterly Reports or Membership fees via BACs transfer, please ensure to use the unique Invoice Reference Number provided by the BSL Administrator for the individual payment.

This Invoice Reference Number will be emailed to you alongside your invoice, once you have accepted all payment terms and conditions on your account.

If you use an old Invoice Reference Number (attributed to a previous payment you have already made), then we will be unable to trace the payment correctly. **This could lead to your BSL authorisation being removed.**

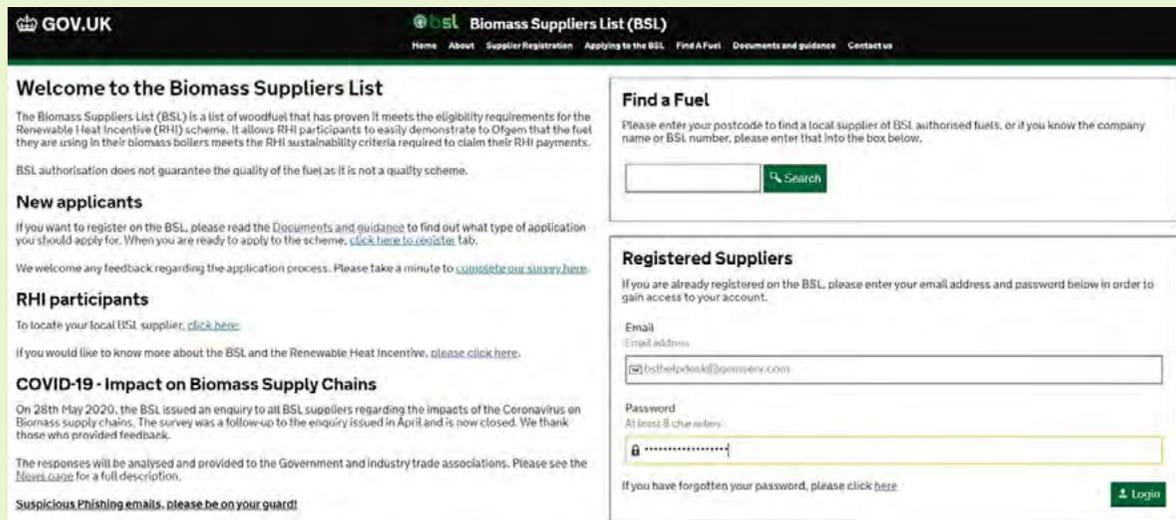
## Updates to your BSL account and application

If there is a change to your account details (e.g. an update to a user email address), you must inform the BSL Administrator immediately. We regularly contact our users regarding their BSL authorisation or account and contact details must therefore be kept up to date.

Some changes to your application can affect the validity of the fuel's authorisation; for example, a material change may mean the fuel no longer meets the RHI sustainability requirements. This may require you to submit a new application.

If there is a change to your fuel authorisation, you must inform the BSL Administrator by ringing 020 7090 7769 or emailing [BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com](mailto:BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com) **within one month** of the change or when submitting your quarterly reporting, whichever occurs first.

Please see the BSL [Applications and Audit Guidance](#) for the full list of what is considered a 'material change'.



The screenshot shows the Biomass Suppliers List (BSL) website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the GOV.UK logo and the BSL logo. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Welcome to the Biomass Suppliers List**: A introductory text explaining the BSL and its purpose.
- New applicants**: Information for those who want to register on the BSL, including a link to the registration process.
- RHI participants**: Information for those who want to locate their local BSL supplier or learn more about the BSL and the RHI.
- COVID-19 - Impact on Biomass Supply Chains**: A section detailing the impact of the Coronavirus on the biomass supply chains and the BSL's response.
- Find a Fuel**: A search box where users can enter a postcode or company name to find a local supplier.
- Registered Suppliers**: A login form for users who are already registered on the BSL, with fields for email and password.

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## BSL Advisory Panel

### Overview

The Advisory Panel provides recommendations to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to ensure the BSL provides value for money and continuous service improvements to support BSL suppliers. It consists of elected supplier members as well as representatives from the Government and relevant industry bodies.

### Panel Meeting 15 Summary

The third Panel meeting of 2020 was held on 24/06/20 and included operational updates from BEIS and Ofgem, in addition to discussions regarding the open BEIS consultations and the results of the BSL COVID-19 surveys.

The following topics were addressed:

- BEIS provided updates on its open consultations. The propositions within these will impact the biomass industry significantly, and BSL Panel responses have been provided. Please see the next page for further detail.
- The BSL Panel Terms of Reference have been amended. The Panel approved the changes and v1.1 is now available [on the website](#).
- Consideration took place around BSL audits, both in terms of the percentages for each supplier type audited, and regarding data sharing around audits referred to Ofgem.

The Decisions and Actions report from the April 2020 Panel Meeting 14 are now available on the [BSL website](#).

### BEIS Publications

Please see below for links to BEIS publications and updates regarding the Renewable Heat Incentive; future considerations around low carbon heat; and biomethane installations:

- [Changes to the Renewable Heat Incentive \(RHI\) schemes](#)
- [Renewable Heat Incentive: biomass combustion in urban areas](#)
- [Renewable Heat Incentive evaluation](#)
- [Future support for low carbon heat](#)
- [RHI evaluation evidence report: biomethane installations](#)

## BSL Panel BEIS Consultation Responses

The BSL Panel submitted two consultation responses to BEIS publications this month, both of which closed on 07/07/20.

### Future support for low carbon heat

The first consultation, [Future support for low carbon heat](#), addresses the Clean Heat Grant which will supersede the Domestic RHI closure to new applicants on 31/03/22. This is a proposed £4,000 fixed grant fee to encourage the use of renewable heat technology installations, however it excludes biomass installations in urban areas.

### The Panel response included the following key points:

- Biomass heat, including all woody sources, will no longer be supported within the future heat strategy. This would create a reduction over time in the volumes of fuel and subsequent reductions in the numbers of suppliers, fuels and income to support the BSL Scheme.
- The grant is insignificant, providing only 20% of domestic RHI for a property and making biomass installations largely unaffordable. It does not support installations above 10kW and is banned for urban areas, severely limiting biomass uptake.
- The 45kW cap neglects small-scale heat decarbonisation projects which were previously encouraged by BEIS. Many of these projects rely on government funding, however with a cap such as this they would not be able to operate. Based on evidence, it is suggested for

- the cap to be increased to 200kW.
- Maintenance and air quality standards must be put in place to enable biomass boilers to provide renewable heat in urban areas.

### The Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive: Ensuring a sustainable scheme

The response to the second consultation, [The Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive](#): Ensuring a sustainable scheme, highlighted the following key points:

- The BSL is happy to support and incorporate the required fuel quality standards into its criteria. The BSL could also expand its scope to administer fuel quality for existing standards.
- Particular attention should be paid to scheme design, to ensure that a fuel quality standard is fit for purpose and supports business compliance. The BSL is keen to help here.
- As there is poor understanding among RHI participants around who can utilise waste wood feedstocks with a valid BSL number, the BSL website could also list what fuel can be used in which boiler.
- By working closely with Ofgem and Defra, the BSL can support more targeted campaigns, using data based on where fuel is sold and burnt, and matching this with air quality monitoring data. This would contribute to more informed policy decisions.
- There should be parity across all technologies that use the same fuel. Burning waste wood should be based on a clear permit mechanism for all technologies.

## Meet the Team: Tom



Hello BSL suppliers,

I'm Tom and I have been working as part of the BSL team at Gemserv for just over two years.

My role within the team is to support suppliers when completing new fuel applications; so please feel free to call the helpdesk and ask for me if you have any questions regarding submitting new applications. I also review applications and work closely with our auditors Woodsure to ensure all applications are compliant to the BSL and RHI Standards.

I strongly believe that low carbon and renewable heat schemes such as the RHI and the BSL are and will continue to play a key role in reducing the UK's total carbon emissions – I'm passionate to play my part in helping the heat industry and country achieve our net zero carbon targets.

My interest in the biomass and renewable energy industry was first sparked while WWOOF'ing in rural Victoria Australia (Gippslands). I spent over three months working on several small self-sustaining farms, working with the landowners to preserve and protect indigenous woodlands, plants and wildlife from forest fires, while also sustainably managing and harvesting timber to provide heat for farm houses' small domestic boilers.

This experience taught me how hard it can be to manage your own sustainable fuel supply, but also how rewarding and beneficial this is for both us and the environment. After my parents moved from London to the Scottish Borders in 2012, I encouraged and helped them plant their own small woodland (around a quarter of an acre). We hope this will go towards supplying their own domestic boiler with fuel and help them to become further self-sufficient in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read a little about me and, once again, should you have any questions regarding your BSL application(s) or account, please feel free to contact our helpdesk and ask for Tom.

## BSL Top Tip

### When do I need to reapply?

Any change made to the way you produce your fuel may affect the validity of the fuel's authorisation. We therefore advise you to regularly check that your application(s) is aligned with your current process.

We describe a 'material change' as being, for example, where and what raw materials are being sourced; your method of drying; and how you transport and distribute your fuel. Any material changes to your fuel may require a new application.

A few examples of a material change can be found below:

- Removal or withdrawal from a quality assurance scheme.
- If the balance of the blend of raw materials changes by more than 5% for any one material.
- Any changes in the producers or traders from which fuel is purchased.
- If the average distance from which the raw materials or final product are purchased increases by more than ten miles.
- If the average distance fuel is transported to increases by more than ten miles.
- If either the method of force drying changes or the fuel used for force drying changes, e.g. if the drying method changes from naturally seasoned to force dried or vice versa.
- If the average moisture content at which you start your forced drying process increases by more than 5%.

Further examples of a material change can be found within our [Applications and Audit Guidance](#).

Please note that not all changes to your process will require a new application and, in some cases, alterations to your existing application(s) can be made to ensure your fuel(s) remain compliant. If you are unsure if a new application is required, please feel free to contact our helpdesk on (0)20 7090 7769 (Opening hours Monday – Friday 10am – 2pm) or email [BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com](mailto:BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com).

## FAQs

To support you in completing your BSL application, please see below for clear answers to frequently asked questions.

The BSL application is available on our [website here](#). You must create an account before you can submit a fuel application.

### **Q. Some of the raw materials are naturally seasoned and some are force dried – which fuel type should I select?**

A. If any proportion of the fuel's raw materials is to be force dried, then you should select a force dried fuel type. You will then be able to enter how much is naturally seasoned and how much is force dried.

### **Q. Are non-UK-based applicants treated equally to UK-based applicants?**

A. Yes. Access to the list for both UK and non-UK-based applicants is treated equally. The criteria are exactly the same.

**Q. Where do I find the B2C2 calculator?**

A. <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/uk-solid-and-gaseous-biomass-carbon-calculator>

**Q. How do I use the B2C2 calculator?**

A. The Ofgem website contains both the calculator and an associated guidance document. Further guidance can be found on the BSL website [here](#).

**Q. What if a member of the supply chain (e.g. a Trader) purchases authorised fuel from another member of the supply chain (e.g. a Producer), which subsequently has its authorisation revoked?**

A. This would represent a material change to the fuel that the Trader was authorised for under the BSL. In this instance, the Trader must contact the BSL Administrator and apply for new authorisation reflecting where they will procure their fuel from in the future.

**Q. Can I use waste or waste blend?**

A. Waste and/or waste blend is acceptable as a fuel, but you still need to apply to the BSL Administrator in the same manner as for other fuels. There may be additional evidence requirements at the application stage, and specific periodic reporting requirements in relation to waste.

**Q. How do I login?**

A. Visit <https://biomass-suppliers-list.service.gov.uk/home> and go to the right side of the page. In the 'Registered Supplier' section, enter your email address and password.

**Q. What does it cost to join the list?**

A. The fees to apply and ongoing costs to be authorised on the BSL vary depending on what supplier type you are and whether you are a company. The breakdown of the fees is included in the Application and Audit Guidance on the BSL website.

**Q. How do I reset my password?**

A. If you have forgotten your password, please [click here](#).

**Q. The email link provided to reset my password doesn't work?**

A. Please select the password reset link emailed to you as soon as you receive the email. The link expires after one hour of being sent. Contact the BSL helpdesk if you are still unable to reset your password.

## Total Authorised Fuels

Table 1 presents a breakdown of the total number of BSL authorised suppliers in June 2020 by supplier type.

Table 2 presents a monthly overview of the total number of BSL applications authorised over the last 12 months.

The decrease in the number of authorised applications seen in December 2019 was primarily due to the BSL Administrator removing those suppliers with outstanding membership payments.



<b>Producer-Traders</b>	3,067
<b>Traders</b>	2,887
<b>Self-Suppliers</b>	3,134
<b>Producers</b>	267

Month	Total Authorised Fuels
<b>June 19</b>	10,191
<b>Jul 19</b>	10,099
<b>Aug 19</b>	10,188
<b>Sep 19</b>	10,181
<b>Oct 19</b>	10,010
<b>Nov 19</b>	10,018
<b>Dec 19</b>	9,171
<b>Jan 20</b>	9,222
<b>Feb 20</b>	9,257
<b>Mar 20</b>	9,281
<b>Apr 20</b>	9,320
<b>May 20</b>	9,349
<b>June 20</b>	9,355

## BSL Audits

The objective of an audit is to validate a supplier’s ongoing eligibility to gain or retain its status as BSL authorised. To ensure you are following your ongoing BSL obligations, records must be kept, and comprehensive documentation must be made available during a BSL audit. The full list of required documents is available on your authorisation letter and within the [Applications and Audit Guidance](#).

The table below presents the total numbers of audits carried out in 2020, in addition to the total numbers of removals due to Non-Compliances at an audit.

	Number of Desk Based Audits	Number of Site Audits	Major Non-Compliance Identified at audit*	Fuels Audited	Fuels Removed following Audit	Fuels Removed from BSL
<b>January</b>	12	5	4	25	2	31
<b>February</b>	14	3	4	24	8	39
<b>March</b>	31	4	4	40	6	20
<b>April</b>	23	0	5	25	6	19
<b>May</b>	19	0	1	20	3	25
<b>June</b>	14	0	5	14	9	40

\*Major Non-Compliances result in removal of BSL fuel number

## Newsletter Feedback?

Please send your thoughts to [BSLhelpdesk@gemserv.com](mailto:BSLhelpdesk@gemserv.com)

### Contact the Biomass Suppliers List for further information

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