



**FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL  
PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL  
PROPERTY)**

**Case Reference** : **CHI/00HB/MNR/2023/0116**

**Property** : **3 Boot Lane  
Bristol  
BS3 4 BD**

**Applicant Tenant** : **Mr J Ellis**

**Representative** : **None**

**Respondent Landlord** : **C Wherrett**

**Representative** : **Countrywide Residential Lettings**

**Type of Application** : **Determination of a Market Rent sections  
13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988**

**Tribunal Members** : **Mr I R Perry FRICS  
Mr C M Davies FRICS  
Mr N I Robinson FRICS**

**Date of Inspection** : **None. Paper determination**

**Date of Decision** : **27<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

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**DECISION**

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### **Summary of Decision**

1. On 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 the Tribunal determined a market rent of £1,000 per month to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

### **Background**

2. The case concerned the determination of a market rent for the subject property following a referral of the Landlord's notice of increase of rent by the Tenant pursuant to sections 13 and 14 Housing Act 1988.
3. On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,000 per month in place of the existing rent of £910 per month to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023. The notice complied with the legal requirements.
4. On 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023 the Tenant appealed to the Tribunal under Section 13(4) (a) of the Housing Act 1988.
5. The Tribunal does not consider it necessary and proportionate in cases of this nature to undertake inspections or hold Tribunal hearings unless either are specifically requested by either party or a particular point arises which merits such an inspection and/or hearing.
6. The Tribunal issued directions on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023 informing the parties that, unless either party objected, the Tribunal intended to determine the rent based on written representations. The parties were invited to make submissions which could include photographs or videos.
7. The Tenant submitted papers by the specified date setting out his respective case. The papers were also copied to the other party.
8. Neither party objected to the matter being determined without an oral hearing, so the Tribunal determined the case 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 based on the written representations received.

### **The Property**

9. From the information given in the papers and available on the internet the property comprises a ground floor flat within a modern purpose-built block of similar flats in an area of mixed-use properties within the centre of Bristol.
10. The accommodation includes a Hall, Living Room/Kitchen, Bathroom with WC and Bedroom. There is a designated parking space.
11. The Energy Performance Rating is 'C' and refers to double glazed windows and electric controlled heating.

### **Submissions**

12. The initial tenancy began on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 at a rent of £885 which was increased 12 months later to £910.

13. The Tenant's submission states that there are partial blinds but no curtains, and that the floorings are carpet to the Bedroom with lino in the Bathroom and laminate flooring elsewhere. All white goods are provided.
14. The Tenant also refers to some black mould around the bath, minor issues relating to a sink plug and waste pipes which block from time to time requiring maintenance.
15. The Tenant also states that the bathroom does not have good ventilation and he provided helpful photographs which show the property to be in good order. One photograph shows clothes drying in the main living room which will likely cause condensation issues.
16. The Tenant provided details of similar properties for rent with asking rents between £850-£950 per month and suggests that the rent for the property should be between £850 and £910 per month. He has paid £910 per month for the last 12 months.

## **The Law**

### **S14 Determination of Rent by First-tier Tribunal**

- (1) Where, under subsection (4) (a) of section 13 above, a tenant refers to a First-tier Tribunal a notice under subsection (2) of that section, the Tribunal shall determine the rent at which, subject to subsections (2) and (4) below, the Tribunal consider that the dwelling-house concerned might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing landlord under an assured tenancy-
  - (a) which is a periodic tenancy having the same periods as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates;
  - (b) which begins at the beginning of the new period specified in the notice;
  - (c) the terms of which (other than relating to the amount of the rent) are the same as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates; and
  - (d) in respect of which the same notices, if any, have been given under any of Grounds 1 to 5 of Schedule 2 to this Act, as have been given (or have effect as if given) in relation to the tenancy to which the notice relates.
- (2) In making a determination under this section, there shall be disregarded-
  - (a) any effect on the rent attributable to the granting of a tenancy to a sitting tenant;
  - (b) any increase in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a relevant improvement carried out by a person who at the time it was carried out was the tenant, if the improvement-
    - (i) was carried out otherwise than in pursuance of an obligation to his immediate landlord, or
    - (ii) was carried out pursuant to an obligation to his immediate landlord being an obligation which did not relate to the specific improvement

concerned but arose by reference to consent given to the carrying out of that improvement; and

- (c) any reduction in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a failure by the tenant to comply with any terms of the tenancy.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(b) above, in relation to a notice which is referred by a tenant as mentioned in subsection (1) above, an improvement is a relevant improvement if either it was carried out during the tenancy to which the notice relates, or the following conditions are satisfied, namely-
- (a) that it was carried out not more than twenty-one years before the date of service of the notice; and
  - (b) that, at all times during the period beginning when the improvement was carried out and ending on the date of service of the notice, the dwelling-house has been let under an assured tenancy; and
  - (c) that, on the coming to an end of an assured tenancy at any time during that period, the tenant (or, in the case of joint tenants, at least one of them) did not quit.
- (4) In this section "rent" does not include any service charge, within the meaning of section 18 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, but, subject to that, includes any sums payable by the tenant to the landlord on account of the use of furniture, in respect of council tax or for any of the matters referred to in subsection (1) (a) of that section, whether or not those sums are separate from the sums payable for the occupation.

### **Consideration and Valuation**

- 17. The Tribunal first considered whether it felt able to reasonably and fairly decide this case based on the papers submitted only with no oral hearing. Having read and considered the papers it decided that it could do so.
- 18. The Tribunal is required to determine the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing Landlord under an assured tenancy. The personal circumstances of the Tenant are not relevant to this issue.
- 19. Having carefully considered the representations from the parties and associated correspondence and using its own judgement and knowledge of rental values in Bristol the Tribunal decided that the market rent for the subject property, with a parking space, if let today in a condition that was usual for such an open market letting would be £1,000 per month.
- 20. The Tenant made no representation that the starting date for the new rent specified in the Landlord's notice would cause the Tenant undue hardship.

### **Determination**

- 21. The Tribunal therefore decided that the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing Landlord under the terms of this assured tenancy was £1,000 per month.

22. The Tribunal directed that the new rent of £1,000 per month should take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023, this being the date specified in the Notice.

### **RIGHTS OF APPEAL**

1. A person wishing to appeal this decision to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) must seek permission to do so by making written application to the First-tier Tribunal at the Regional office which has been dealing with the case. Where possible you should send your application for permission to appeal by email to [rpsouthern@justice.gov.uk](mailto:rpsouthern@justice.gov.uk) as this will enable the First-tier Tribunal Regional office to deal with it more efficiently.
2. The application must arrive at the Tribunal within 28 days after the Tribunal sends to the person making the application written reasons for the decision.
3. If the person wishing to appeal does not comply with the 28-day time limit, the person shall include with the application for permission to appeal a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28-day time limit; the Tribunal will then decide whether to extend time or not to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed.
4. The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the Tribunal to which it relates, state the grounds of appeal, and state the result the party making the application is seeking.