



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

<b>Case Reference</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>LON/00AN/F77/2025/0225</b>
<b>Property</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>14 Cromwell Avenue Hammersmith London W6 9LA</b>
<b>Applicant</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Mr J McCourt (Tenant)</b>
<b>Representative</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Thomas Pocklington Trust (Landlord)</b>
<b>Representative</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Type of Application</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>S.70 Rent Act 1977 – Determination of a new fair rent</b>
<b>Tribunal Members</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Mr N. Martindale FRICS</b>
<b>Date and venue of Meeting</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>30 September 2025 First Tier Tribunal (London) HMCTS 10 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7LR</b>
<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>30 September 2025</b>

---

**REASONS FOR DECISION**

---

**Background**

- 1 By an application of 24 April 2025, the landlord applied to the Rent Officer for registration of a fair rent. The rent stated as payable at the time of the application was said to be £178.00 pw. This included a variable service charge of £5.03. The landlord sought a new rent of £200 pw including a variable service charge of £5.03 pw.

- 2 With effect from 2 June 2025, the Rent Officer registered a fair rent of £199.50 pw with an uncapped fair rent not specified, figures including the variable service charge of £5.03 pw for information. There was an objection to the new fair rent from the tenant. The First Tier Tribunal was notified of this objection and a request for a fresh determination of the rent.

### **Directions**

- 3 Directions of 6 August 2025 were issued by the Tribunal, for case progression. Neither party requested a hearing.

### **Representations**

- 4 Standard Reply Forms were issued by the Tribunal prior and both parties invited to complete and return them. The Tribunal did not receive completed forms from each. The tenant listed continuing works to other flats in the purpose-built block creating noise and dust and reducing light to the Property leaving it virtually derelict.

### **Inspection**

- 5 The Tribunal did not inspect the Property. The Tribunal was however able to externally view it from Google Streetview (@ September 2022). The Property appeared to be part of an 1910 purpose built Edwardian era block flats on ground, first, second and third levels. The Property is on the second floor. The block faced a line of tall albeit pruned deciduous trees and then a 3-level block of 1960's Council flats. There is restricted on street and no off-street parking, in what is an established residential area of similar ages and conditions. The road appears to be a side street no subject to heavy road traffic.
- 6 Externally the building containing the Property, appeared to be in good condition, with fair faced brick finish to the front external walls. There is likely to be a double pitched tiled finished roof over the building. The Property has two bedrooms, living room/ kitchen, bathroom/wc. There are small communal areas outside.
- 7 There appears to be wooden double hung sash single glazed windows and full central heating. The bathroom and kitchen are assumed to be functional but basic. There is little information on landlord carpets and curtains or white goods if any.
- 8 The Tribunal is grateful for such representations as were received from the parties.

### **Law**

- 9 When determining a fair rent the Committee, in accordance with the Rent Act 1977, section 70, had regard to all the circumstances including

the age, location and state of repair of the property. It also disregarded the effect of (a) any relevant tenant's improvements and (b) the effect of any disrepair or other defect attributable to the tenant or any predecessor in title under the regulated tenancy, on the rental value of the property.

- 10 In *Spath Holme Ltd v Chairman of the Greater Manchester etc. Committee* (1995) 28 HLR 107 and *Curtis v London Rent Assessment Committee* [1999] QB 92 the Court of Appeal emphasized
  - (a) that ordinarily a fair rent is the market rent for the property discounted for 'scarcity' (i.e. that element, if any, of the market rent, that is attributable to there being a significant shortage of similar properties in the wider locality available for letting on similar terms - other than as to rent - to that of the regulated tenancy) and
  - (b) that for the purposes of determining the market rent, assured tenancy (market) rents are usually appropriate comparables. (These rents may have to be adjusted where necessary to reflect any relevant differences between those comparables and the subject property).
- 11 Where the condition of a property is poorer than that of comparable properties, so that the rents of those comparables are towards twice that proposed rent for the subject property, it calls into question whether or not those transactions are truly comparable. Would prospective tenants of modernized properties in good order consider taking a tenancy of an un-modernised house in poor repair and with only basic facilities or are they in entirely separate lettings markets? The problem for the Tribunal is that the only evidence of value levels available to us is of modernised properties. We therefore have to use this but make appropriate discounts for the differences, rather than ignore it and determine a rent entirely based on our own knowledge and experience, whenever we can.
- 12 On the evidence of the comparable lettings and our own general knowledge of market rent levels in and around Hammersmith, the Tribunal accepts that the Property would let on normal Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) terms, for £500 pw. This then, is the appropriate starting point from which to determine the rent of the Property as it falls to be valued.
- 13 The Tribunal noted the absence of double-glazed units to the windows, assumed functional but basic kitchen and bathroom fittings and older carpets and curtain provision. A deduction for these shortcomings amounts to £125, so that the adjusted market rent is £375 pw. There is no evidence to suggest the Property is derelict.
- 14 The Tribunal also has to consider the element of scarcity and whether demand exceeded supply. The Tribunal found that there was scarcity in

the locality of Hammersmith for this type of property and makes a further deduction of 20% from the adjusted market rent, leaving an uncapped fair rent of £300 pw.

- 15 The fair rent to be registered on this basis alone would be £300 pw, but, the new rent is limited by the statutory Maximum Fair Rent Cap calculation. The MFRC limits any increase to the change in RPI (set two months prior at each date), between the date of the last registration of a fair rent and the current, plus 5%. The calculations are shown in the MFR form and this caps the new fair rent at £204.03 pw. As the MFR cap is below the uncapped fair rent above, the new fair rent will be capped at £204.03 pw. The new fair rent is therefore registered at this figure.
- 16 The Rent Act makes no allowance for the Tribunal to take account of hardship arising from the new rent payable compared with the existing rent registered. The landlord is entitled but, not compelled, to charge the tenants rent at the registered figure from the effective date below. The landlord may not charge more than the fair rent but may charge less if it wishes to, or is otherwise required to, under other regulations which may limit its increases in rent as a landlord.

**Chairman N Martindale FRICS**

**Dated 30 September 2025**

### **Rights of appeal**

By rule 36(2) of the Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Property Chamber) Rules 2013, the tribunal is required to notify the parties about any right of appeal they may have.

If either party is dissatisfied with this decision, they may apply for permission to appeal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) on any point of law arising from this Decision.

Prior to making such an appeal, an application must be made, in writing, to this Tribunal for permission to appeal. Any such application must be made within 28 days of the issue of this decision to the person making the application (regulation 52 (2) of The Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Property Chamber) Rule 2013).

If the application is not made within the 28-day time limit, such application must include a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28 day time limit; the tribunal will then look at such reason(s) and decide whether to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed, despite not being within the time limit.

The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the tribunal to which it relates (i.e., give the date, the property, and the case number), state the grounds of appeal and state the result the party making the application is seeking.

If the tribunal refuses to grant permission to appeal, a further application for permission may be made to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).