



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

Case Reference : **CAM/12UB/MNR/2025/0796**

Property : **10 Lisa Court
Frank's Lane
Cambridge
CB4 1SW**

Applicant Tenant : **Marie-Francoise Besnier**

Representative : **None**

Respondent Landlords : **Quanli Qu & Xiuxia Gao**

Representative : **None**

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

Tribunal Members : **Mr I R Perry FRICS**

Date of Inspection : **None, determined on the papers**

Date of Decision : **26th January 2026**

DECISION

Summary of Decision

1. On 26th January 2026 the Tribunal determined a market rent of £1,450 per month to take effect from 19th November 2025.

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 7th October 2025 the Landlords served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,499 per month, in place of the existing rent of £1,450 per month, to take effect from 19th November 2025. The notice complied with the legal requirements.
4. On 11th November 2025 the Tenant applied to the Tribunal under Section 13(4) (a) of the Housing Act 1988.
5. The Tribunal does not routinely 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 14th November 2025 which were amended and re-issued on 2nd December 2025 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.
7. The Landlords and the Tenant both submitted papers by the specified dates setting out their respective case. The papers were also copied to the opposing party.
8. Neither party objected to the matter being determined without an oral hearing, so the Tribunal determined the case on 26th January 2026 based on the written representations received.
9. These reasons address **the key issues** raised by the parties. They do not recite each and every point referred to either in submissions or during any hearing. However, this does not imply that any points raised, or documents not specifically mentioned were disregarded. If a point or document was referred to in the evidence or submissions that was relevant to a specific issue, then it was considered by the Tribunal. The Tribunal concentrates on those issues which, in its opinion, are fundamental to the application.

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.

The Property

10. From the information given in the papers and available on the internet, the property comprises a first floor maisonette within a modern block of similar properties on the northeastern side of Cambridge.
11. There are local amenities providing day-to-day requirements with a full range of amenities available within Cambridge.
12. The property has its own ground floor entrance door leading via stairs to accommodation comprising a living room, kitchen, 2 bedrooms and a bathroom with wc. Outside there is parking, but no allocated space, and a small garden store.
13. A table and chairs, bed and white goods are all provided by the Landlords. Windows are double glazed, heating is from a gas-fired system, and the Energy Performance Rating is 'D'.

Submissions

14. The initial tenancy began on 19th January 2018 at a rent of £1,065 per month. The rent was last increased on 19th October 2024 to £1,450 per month.
15. The Tenant completed a Reply Form for the Tribunal in which she describes old paint and carpets in the living room and in bedroom one, dated fittings in the bathroom and historic issues with the pressure in the boiler.
16. The Tenant also provides details and an analysis of other properties advertised for rent within ½ mile of Lisa Court. The comparables provided range from £1,095 to £1,850 and include flats and houses.
17. The Tenant avers that the neighbourhood has downgraded since 1999, that Police interventions in Frank's Lane are common and that the flat is expensive to heat.
18. The Landlords also completed a Reply Form in which they describe the property as a maisonette, that the condition in the kitchen as good or OK and the condition of the main bedroom as good. They also aver that the boiler was replaced about 5 years ago which would probably improve the Energy Performance rating to 'C'.
19. The Landlords refer to statistics which show rent increases in the same postcode and refer to the recent letting of another property they own in Atkins Close for £1,450 per month. They state that this is an older property and not as good condition as the subject flat. A copy of the tenancy agreement for Atkins Close was provided.

Consideration and Valuation

20. 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.
21. 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 Parties are not relevant to this issue.
22. Having carefully considered the representations from the parties and associated correspondence and using its own judgement and knowledge of rental values in Cambridge, the Tribunal decided that the market rent for the subject property if let today in a condition that was usual for such an open market letting would be £1,500 per month
23. Such an open market letting would be for a tenantable property in good order with the Landlord responsible for internal decoration and on the basis that carpets, curtains and white goods would all be provided by the Landlord.
24. From the submissions made the Tribunal concluded that the property could not be described as good throughout and that an adjustment of £50 per month should be made to reflect the property's condition.
25. The Tribunal considered the historic issues regarding the boiler but does not consider that these issues would have bearing on the rental value as at the date specified in the Notice.
26. 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

27. 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 £1,450 per month.
28. The Tribunal directed that the new rent of £1,450 per month should take effect from 19th November 2025, 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 rpeastern@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.