



FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL
PROPERTY CHAMBER
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)

Case Reference	CAM/09UB/MNR/2026/0053
Property	54 Boater Drive, Houghton Regis, Luton, LU5 6SQ
Tenant	Lorna Connolly
Tenant's Representative	Simple Life Homes
Landlord	The PRS Reit (Bluebird Investments) LLP
Landlord's Address	C/O Ascend, Stafford Court, 145 Washway Road, Sale, M33 7PE
Landlord's Representative	N/A
Date of Application	20 March 2026
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Judge A Arul David Hunt
Date of Decision	2 June 2026
Rent Determined	£1,650 per calendar month
Date the new rent takes effect	13 May 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 11 March 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,700 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £1,595 pcm to take effect from 13 May 2026.
2. On 20 March 2026, under Section 13(4)(a) of the Housing Act 1988, the Tenant referred the Landlord's notice proposing a new rent to the Tribunal for determination of a market rent.
3. The assured tenancy commenced on 13 May 2025 for a term of 12 months. The rental period is monthly.

Allocation of Repairs between Landlord and Tenant.

4. As per section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

Services Charges or furniture provided by Landlord (other than carpets and curtain and white goods specified below) and the costs relating to the same.

5. None.

Liability for Council Tax

6. The Tenant is responsible for the payment of Council Tax in respect of the Property. The rent determined is exclusive of Council Tax.

Any other terms of the tenancy taken into consideration in determining the rent.

7. None.

Inspection/Hearing

8. Neither party requested an oral hearing. The Tribunal has considered this case on the basis of the papers provided by the parties and its own knowledge and specialist expertise.

The Property

9. The Property is a semi-detached house offering the following accommodation:

3 bedrooms, 1 living room, 1 kitchen, 1 dining room, 1 bedroom, 1 wc and 1 storage area.

Outside: garden.

The Property appears to benefit from central heating via a boiler and has uPVC windows.

The Property is situated in the area known as Houghton Regis to the west of Luton and north of Dunstable. It is not in the immediate vicinity of the amenities of those areas however it is close to the arterial roads.

Evidence

10. Both the Tenant and the Landlord returned the Tribunal's Reply forms.

The Tenant.

11. The Tenant made the following comments.
12. The Tenant believes the proposed rent of £1,700 per month is above the comparable properties for the area and believes that it should be £1,550 to £1,650 pcm with an average of £1,600.
13. The Tenant noted that, whilst they have kept the Property in very good condition, it is at least five years old and therefore not comparable to newer build properties or those with modern specification.
14. In terms of rental evidence, the Tenant referred to a table produced by them which showed a number of properties including as follows. Firstly, two three-bedroom semi-detached properties on Linmere Walk, Houghton Regis; one for £1,600 pcm said to be in the same area and a modern build and one for £1,650 pcm said to be a comparable new build. There was a further property in Oak Mead, Linmere at £1,750 pcm which is a three-bedroom new build which the Tenant stated had premium property features. There was a property at Plaiters Way which was a three-bedroom house said to be in the lower end of the local range at £1,550 per month. Finally Box Crescent, Houghton Regis at £1,700 pcm said to be in the upper range and which is also a three bedroom semi-detached property. There were also some brand-new properties said to be £1,650 pcm at different addresses in Dunstable and the Tenant asserted that the majority of the comparables fell between £1,550 and £1,650 per month. The Tenant did not supply full particulars of these properties.

15. Therefore, the Tenant asserted that £1,700 pcm represents the top end of the market and that should be reserved for those with additional or premium features.

The Landlord.

16. The following comparables were provided by the Landlord. The Landlord referred to a best price guide which showed a number of properties including: property in Sewell Springs in Sewell Lane, Sewell which was a three bedroom end of terrace at £2,300 pcm; a property at Saint Michaels Avenue, Dunstable which is a three bedroom semi-detached property at £2,050 pcm; a property at Chilton Road Dunstable, also a three bedroom detached property at £1,950 per month; a further property at Saint Michaels Avenue which is three bedroom semi-detached at £1,850 pcm, and a property at Dalmatian Drive, Hilton Regis which is a three bedroom semi-detached at £1,850 pcm but which appeared to have been either withdrawn from the market. There was a further property in Teasel Crescent, Houghton Regis which was a three bedroom semi-detached at £1,765 per month and then further properties in Dunstable which appeared to no longer be available. There was another property in Teasel Crescent, Dunstable which is a three bedroom semi-detached at £1,750 pcm, one in Straw Bank in Dunstable which is also a three bedroom semi-detached house at £1,750 pcm and then finally some properties in Harebell Gardens in Dunstable. These were three bedroom detached houses and there appeared to be three available, despite the cover picture being the same. We were not provided with additional information about those properties.

Determination and Valuation

17. Relying on its own expert, general knowledge of rental values in the area, the Tribunal considers that in good order the market rent for the Property would be £1,650 pcm.
18. The Tribunal considered the comparable evidence from both parties. The properties at Linmere Walk were quite far away from the subject Property and on an estate where there was better road access. There were other properties such as Harebell Gardens which are also further out and seem to be larger properties, for example with double frontages. The closest property in Straw Bank had an additional floor due to an attic conversion and was at £1,750 pcm. The Tribunal was mindful of the table produced by the Landlord of some of the properties on the Harebell estate nearby but this was not always clear, for example, some of the detached properties had lower values than the semi-detached properties.
19. In the view of the Tribunal the subject Property can still be regarded as relatively new at around five years old and the Tribunal did not consider that there is likely to be a significant differential in market rental values. However, many of the

comparables were in different areas or larger properties. The Tribunal's view is therefore that the appropriate market rent for the subject Property is £1,650 pcm.

Market rent

£1,650 pcm

Undue hardship

20. The new rent takes effect from the date specified in the Landlord's Notice of Increase unless that would cause undue hardship to the Tenant. In cases of undue hardship, the Tribunal has a discretion to fix a later starting date up to the date a Tribunal makes its determination.
21. The Tenant asked the Tribunal to fix a latest starting date in this case. They said this will otherwise cause undue hardship because they are in receipt of Universal Credit and have a young dependent child. There is also a reference to not currently working due to health conditions although these are not specified.
22. The Landlord did not respond to the Tenant's application for postponement due to hardship.
23. The Tribunal did not consider that hardship has been demonstrated. Rent increases will rarely be welcomed by a Tenant and the increase is of a modest amount from £1,595 to £1,650. There was no evidence in support of the hardship grounds advanced provided to the Tribunal. The Tribunal considers that the rent is likely to be covered by Universal Credit and not directly by the Tenant.
24. As a result of the Tribunal's decision, the rent will increase by £55 a month from £1,595 to £1,650. The date specified in the Landlord's notice was 13 May 2026. The Tribunal considers that, for the increase to take effect from the date in the Landlord's Notice would not cause undue hardship, and accordingly sets the starting date for the new rent as 13 May 2026.

Decision

25. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £1,650 per calendar month with effect from 13 May 2026.

APPEAL PROVISIONS

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 statement of reasons (regulation 52 (2) of The Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Property Chamber) Rules 2013) stating the grounds upon which it is intended to rely in the appeal.