



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

Case Reference	BIR/00CN/MNR/2025/0830
Property	14 Northgate Harborne Birmingham B17 9EP
Tenant	Christine Thomson
Tenant's Representative	None
Landlord	Grainger plc
Landlord's Address	Citygate St James's Boulevard Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JE
Landlord's Representative	Ryan Tucker – BPT (Residential Investments) Ltd
Date of Application	2 November 2025
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Nicholas Wint FRICS – Chair Neil Atherton MRICS
Date of Decision	18 June 2026
Rent Determined	£230 per week
Date the new rent takes effect	18 June 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. The Landlord served a notice dated 24 September 2025 under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £240 per week in place of the existing rent of £230 per week to take effect from 17 November 2025.
2. On 22 October 2025, 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 6 April 1992. The rental period is weekly.

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 curtains 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.
7. The rent determined is exclusive of Council Tax.

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

8. None.

Inspection/Hearing

9. Neither party requested an inspection or a hearing.
10. The Tribunal considered this case on the basis of the papers provided by the parties and its own knowledge and specialist expertise.

The Property

11. The Property is a terraced house and provides the following accommodation:

Internal: Living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom (shower only), and 3 bedrooms and 1 toilet.

Outside: Front and rear garden.

The Property has central heating and single glazed windows. The Tenant has provided all the carpets and curtains and white goods.

Evidence

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

The Tenant

13. The Tenant submitted written representations including various photographs opposing the Landlords proposed rental increase.
14. In the Tenant's representations it detailed the construction of the Property and its accommodation. Prior to the Tenants occupation the Property was a 2-bedroom house which has subsequently been converted to form 3 bedrooms. However, the Tenant considers the third bedroom is only suitable for a single bed with no bedside furniture.
15. The Tenant stated they carried out various improvements including installing new medicine cabinets, flooring, light switch, door, door furniture, gas services door, garden fence, fitted wardrobes and a radiator.
16. The tenant advises the Property has a gas fire in the front living room but it does not give out sufficient heat to warm the Property and as the Property is single glazed and has no cavity walls with minimal loft insulation is cold.
17. The Tenant also stated the windows leak when it rains and requires replacement.
18. The kitchen was dated and in need of modernisation with a storage cupboard having fallen off the wall and the worktops were ill fitting and the sink was leaking. As a consequence, the Tenant has installed a new kitchen at a cost of approx. £8,000
19. The Tenant also stated the Property had not been externally decorated since 2020 and the first-floor front elevation window ledge is now rotten and the

workmanship below an acceptable standard. The Tenant supplied various photographs concerning the poor standard of workmanship carried out by the Landlord including in relation to the gas supply pipe.

20. The Tenant therefore considered the Property is in need of modernisation and an increase in rent to £240 per week was unreasonable and would cause financial hardship.

The Landlord

21. The Landlord submitted a written statement setting out details of the Property's location and accommodation.
22. In the statement the Landlord considered the Property to be in a sought-after location close to various local amenities and transport links. In the Landlords opinion the Property was in a fair condition but not necessarily up to modern standards.
23. In support of the Landlords rental proposal the following comparable evidence was referred to:

1 North Gate Harborne – Furnished 3 bed end terrace at £404 per week
12 West Pathway Harborne – Furnished 3 bed end terraced at £404 per week

Determination and Valuation

24. The Tribunal had regard to the submissions and evidence and to its own expert general knowledge of rental values in the area.
25. From the details provided by the Landlord, 1 North Gate appears to have been extended to the rear and has a large modernised kitchen and 12 West Pathway has a large kitchen with an island unit.
26. The Tribunal considers that the market rental of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £350 per week on an unfurnished basis.
27. This is the rent we would expect the property to let for in the open market if it was in the same general condition as other properties that are offered to let in the market.
28. The Tribunal then made adjustments for the tenant's improvements referred to above and the condition of the Property amounting to £120 per week.
29. The Tribunals full valuation is shown below:

Starting Rent	£350 per week
<u>Less</u> <i>Adjustments for tenant's improvements and condition</i>	<u>£120 per week</u>

Market rent **£230 per week**

Undue hardship

30. 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.
31. The Tenant made an application in this respect. The Tenant stated the proposed increase would cause financial hardship and would be unaffordable.
32. As a result of our decision the rent will increase by £10 per week. The date specified in the landlord's notice was 17 November 2025 however given the Tenants request the Tribunal sets the starting date for the new rent as at the date of this decision, being 18 June 2026.

Decision

33. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £230 per week month with effect from 18 June 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.