

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	MAN/00EJ/MNR/2026/0144
Property	Nimy Cottage, Front Street, Tantobie, Stanley DH9 9RE
Tenant	Ian Dennis & Jayne Dennis (formerly Jayne Rita Lewis)
Tenant's Representative	N/A
Landlord	Donna Green
Landlord's Address	c/0 3 Larch Terrace, Tantobie, Stanley, Co Durham
Landlord's Representative	N/A
Date of Application	01.04.2026
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	I Jefferson R Stewart MBE
Date of Decision	22.06.2026
Rent Determined	£1,000pcm
Date the new rent takes effect	24.04.2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 15th March 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,200 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £800 pcm to take effect from 24th April 2026.
On 1st April 2026, under Section 13(4)(a) of the Housing Act 1988, the Tenant appealed the proposed new rent to the Tribunal for determination.
The monthly tenancy commenced on 24th April 2019.

Allocation of Repairs and Council Tax between Landlord and Tenant.

2. Responsibility for Repairs is as per section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. The property is Unfurnished. No service charge is payable.
The Tenant is responsible for the payment of Council Tax in respect of the Property.

Inspection/Hearing

3. 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, but without using any secret evidence.

The Property

4. The Property is a 2 storey stone building under a pitched slate roof with substantial Annex or outbuilding to the rear. Accommodation comprises 1 Reception, modern Kitchen, ground-floor WC, Utility, to the first-floor 3 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms, and Annex comprising 2 small rooms. Garden to rear (currently partly fenced off). Double-glazed and radiator central heating.

The Property is situated in Tantobie, near Stanley, in close proximity of amenities.

Representations as to Rental Value

5. Tenant

Average rental costs in DH9 are £700 to £900pcm for 3-Bed homes based on public info, rising to £985pcm three miles beyond. Properties of higher rental value are rare, and better appointed. The property is poorly maintained, and EPC D.

Asking rent is too high, even although Landlord not increased for many years. Repairs only undertaken after notice.

Numerous on-line asking rent properties cited, but no summary, and most, if not all, out of area.

6. Landlord

The Landlord did not put forward any rental evidence, save to confirm that the rent had not been increased for 10 years, and she regarded the tenancy equivalent to a 'grace and favour' basis, but now the rent needed to be put on a more realistic level.

Tribunal Determination

7. The Tribunal found the following facts:

- i Landlord has undertaken reactive repairs on Notice. Tenant occasionally completes minor repairs after Landlord provides materials.
- ii Minor scuffs and marks to internal decoration and some carpets. Water ingress issues to Utility caused by Tenants leaking washer. Also, to 1 Annex room, Landlord trying to arrange expert investigation.

8. The Tribunal had regard to its own knowledge and experience of market rent levels for similar properties in the area, but without any specific or secret evidence, and the representations from each Party. The Tribunal considers that the Market Rent of the subject Property in reasonable order would be £1,100pcm. This is the rent the Tribunal would expect the property to let for in the open market if it was in the same general condition as comparable properties and assuming floor coverings, white goods and curtains/blinds are provided by the landlord.

9. From this figure, the Tribunal made adjustments as follows:

Water ingress to 1 room	50.00
Garden Safety fencing reduced useable area on a temporary basis	25.00
Tenant undertaking various minor works over many years	25.00

10. The Tenant claims that the rent took up most of his wages. No further evidence was before the Tribunal in relation to Section 14 (7) whether undue hardship would be caused to the tenant by the new rent being payable from 24th April 2026, the date specified in the Landlord's Notice. The Tribunal did not consider there was sufficient information provided to justify undue hardship.

Decision

11. In the circumstances the Tribunal determines a Market Rent of £1,000pcm payable from 24th April 2026.

Appeal Provisions

12. If either party is dissatisfied with this decision, they may apply for permission to appeal to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) but generally only on a 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 stating the grounds upon which it is intended to rely in the appeal.