

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	CAM-OOKB-MNR-2026-0100
Property	13 Sparrows Close, Bedford, Mk42 6gl
Tenants	Victoria Wauchope Jonathan Wouchope
Tenant's Representative	None
Landlord	Canary Holdings 1 Limited (UK)
Landlord's Address	c/o Allsop Letting & Management, 8th Floor, Platform Building, New Station St, LS1 4JB
Landlord's Representative	Emmanouil Alferis, Allsop Letting and Management Limited
Date of Application	10 May 2026
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Judge Alice Holtom Patrick McGreal MRICS
Date of Decision	9 July 2026
Rent Determined	£1875 per calendar month
Date the new rent takes effect	6 June 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 1 April 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,875 per calendar month (“pcm”) in place of the existing rent of £1,775 pcm to take effect from 6 June 2026.
2. On 10 May 2026, under Section 13(4)(a) of the Housing Act 1988, the Tenants 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 June 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.

Liability for Council Tax

5. The Tenants are 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.

6. A basic broadband service is provided by the Landlord which tenants can enhance on payment of an additional monthly fee.

Inspection/Hearing

7. 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

8. The Property is a three-bedroom almost new house forming part of a developing housing estate offering the following accommodation:

Living room, kitchen/diner, three bedrooms (one ensuite), bathroom and downstairs toilet.

Outside: Garden and two parking spaces.

The Property is situated in a developing housing estate

Evidence

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

The Tenant.

10. The Tenant made the following comments:

- a) The proposed rent exceeds the market rate for comparable properties in the local area.
- b) Neighbouring properties are currently rented at £1,700 per month, one of which is a larger semi-detached property (3 bedrooms with study).
- c) The rent agreed by Tenant at the commencement of the tenancy was above open market rent.
- a) In September 2025 the Tenants learned that neighbours were renting a similar property with a study for £1,700 pcm.
- b) In December 2025 the Tenant learned that neighbours in an identical property were paying £1,700 per month with one month's rent free.
- c) A larger neighbouring property with an additional study has only recently been proposed an increase to £1,850 per month.
- d) An identical neighbouring Kennett property renewed at £1,825 per month.
- e) The evidence supports a market rent closer to £1,650.
- f) The landlord has provided examples of lettings supporting the proposed rent, but no supporting documentation has been included to show the final agreed rents, whether any incentives were offered, or how those properties compare with the Tenants', in terms of size, specification and condition. The Landlord did subsequently confirm that no incentives were paid in respect of those renewals.

11. In terms of rental evidence, the tenants provided details of a comparable property advertised on *Rightmove* at Willow Grove, Wixams, MK42. The property is a three-bedroom, two-bathroom house marketed at a rent of £1,555 pcm.

12. In their Reply, the Tenants provided further comparables comprising properties on Willowy Road, Wixams, MK42, advertised at £1,650 pcm, and Verde Avenue, Wixams, MK42, advertised at £1,800 pcm. Both are three-bedroom, two-bathroom properties said to be in a similar condition to the subject property. The Tenants also referred to a four-bedroom, three-bathroom property at Rainbow Close, Bedford, MK42, advertised at £1,900 pcm.

The Landlord

13. The following comparables were provided by the Landlord, which they state are lettings achieved for similar properties of broadly comparable size within the landlord's portfolio
 - a) 28 Rosemary Lane - October 2025 - £1,850pcm.
 - b) 94 Southern Cross - April 2026 - £1,850pcm.
 - c) 25 Sparrow Close - April 2026 - £1,925pcm
 - d) 21 Sparrow Close - April 2026 - £1,950pcm.
 - e) 9 Sparrow Close - June 2026 - £1,900pcm.
14. The landlord also provided details of a further five comparable properties obtained from *Rightmove*. These comprised three-bedroom end-of-terrace and semi-detached houses located within a five-mile radius of the subject property's postcode. The advertised rents ranged from £1,850 to £1,950 per calendar month.

Determination and Valuation

15. The Tenants submit that the rent agreed on the grant of the tenancy was too high. However, the Tribunal's task is to determine the current market rent. The rent originally agreed between the parties was individually negotiated twelve months previously and is therefore not relevant to the Tribunal's determination.
16. The Tenants refer to a number of larger neighbouring rental properties with rents of between £1,700 and £1,850 per calendar month. However, as no addresses or further particulars have been provided, or dates when those rents were achieved, the Tribunal is unable to assess whether those properties are truly comparable and therefore attaches no weight to this evidence.

17. Willow Grove was rented in December 2025 with a one-month incentive resulting in an effective rent of approximately £1,555 per calendar month. However, the Tribunal is mindful that landlords respond to prevailing market conditions. The period between November and January is traditionally a quieter period for lettings activity and landlords may adjust rents or offer incentives accordingly. The Tribunal's task is to determine the open market rent as of 6 June 2026. Market conditions on that date may have been materially different from those prevailing in December 2025, and the rent at which a property was marketed at that earlier time is therefore of limited assistance in determining the market rent at the valuation date.
18. The Landlord has identified four properties of the same type or similar and in the same location as the subject property which were re-let at £1,850 to £1,950 pcm in April and June 2026. Whilst the Tenant has contended that the Landlord has not provided any supporting documentation, the Landlord has confirmed that they are properties within their own portfolio and that they are of the same type as the subject property. The Tribunal further notes that comparables provided by the Landlord are either on the same road or the neighbouring road to the subject property which is significant when looking at comparables in a developing estate. This is compelling evidence of the rental value of the subject house.
19. The Tribunal has considered all the rental evidence provided by the parties. The Tenants' comparables comprise of advertised rents, including one property advertised at £1,555 per calendar month and others advertised at between £1,650 and £1,900 per calendar month. Whilst these provide some indication of asking rents in the locality, advertised rents do not necessarily reflect the rent ultimately achieved. The Tribunal also notes that the lowest comparable relied upon by the tenants was marketed approximately six months before the valuation date and the comparables provided are not neighbouring properties.
20. The Tribunal places greater weight on the landlord's evidence of lettings achieved for similar properties within its portfolio, particularly those agreed in April and June 2026, as these are closer to the valuation date and represent rents actually achieved in the market rather than asking rents. The achieved rents of between £1,850 and £1,950 per calendar month are also broadly consistent with the *Rightmove* evidence produced by the landlord for comparable three-bedroom properties in the locality. Taking the evidence as a whole, the Tribunal finds the landlord's rental evidence to be the more persuasive indicator of the open market rent as of 6 June 2026,
21. Relying on its own expert, general knowledge of rental values in the area, and the comparables provided by the Landlord, the Tribunal considers that the market rental of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £1,875. 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 the comparable properties including having white goods and curtains provided by the landlord.

22. From this level of rent, the Tribunal has made no adjustments.

Starting Rent	<u>£1775 pcm</u>
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Market rent	£1,875 pcm
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Decision

12. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £1,875 per calendar month with effect from 6 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.