

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	CAM/42UB/MNR/2026/0065
Property	72 Sycamore Close, Ipswich, IP8 3RL
Tenant	Chris Roberts
Tenant's Representative	
Landlord	Thomas Smith
Landlord's Address	Rents Property Management Services Ltd, Thurleston Barn, Thurleston Lane, Ipswich, IP1 6TF
Landlord's Representative	
Date of Application	15 April 2026
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Judge Wendy Banks Dr Jan Wilcox
Date of Decision	18 May 2026 18 May 2026 21 June 2026 – amended in accordance with rule 50 of The Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal)(Property Chamber) Rules 2013
Rent Determined	£995 per calendar month

Date the new rent takes effect	13 May 2026
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REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 20 March 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £995.00 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £975 pcm to take effect from 13 May 2026.
2. On 15 April 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 January 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 terraced house offering the following accommodation:

Two bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen and bathroom

Outside: Allocated parking space and a garden.

The Property is situated in the Pinewood area of Ipswich within 3 miles of the city centre.

Evidence

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

The Tenant.

11. In relation to rental evidence, the Tenant relied upon a screenshot of a property that appears to have been listed on 24 March 2026 also in Sycamore Close for £950 pcm. It is listed as being 2 bedrooms and shows what appears to be driveway in front of the property but there are no other details of the property. The Tenant also relies upon a rent calculator from an online portal "Open Rent" which shows an estimated range for rental between £780 and £1,260. There are a further 3 comparators from Open Rent of properties nearby ranging from £925 pcm to £975 pcm but none of these appear to offer off road parking or an allocated parking space.
12. The Tenant further relies upon a Property Valuation Report created by Martin & Co dated 27 April 2026. There are comparators within the report ranging from £925 pcm to £1,025 pcm. Under the heading Market Insight it states an average let price of £947 pcm but goes on to state that in the Ipswich rental market, houses typically let for £1,084 per month.

The Landlord

13. In relation to rental evidence, the Landlord provided a document entitled Best Price Guide which had been compiled by Rents Property Management Services Ltd. This included 5 comparable properties situated close by to the Property including 1 property that had been let on the same road as the Property itself. This had an advertised rent of £995 pcm. There was limited information attached to the property but it was shown as a 2 bed terraced house. The photograph of the exterior did not show any allocated parking. The other comparables ranged from £995.00 to £1,195.00 pcm. One of the comparables on Belmont Road was of a similar type and appeared to offer the same amenities as the Property such as off road parking and a garden and this was marketed at £1,025 pcm.

Determination and Valuation

14. The Tribunal also had the benefit of photographs of the exterior and interior of the Property. The Tribunal found that the Property was of a good condition and appeared to be well maintained.
15. Having regard to the good standard of the property, the parking facilities, the garden in an area such as this, and the close proximity to the city centre; and relying on its own expert, general knowledge of rental values in the area, and the comparables provided by both parties, the Tribunal considers that the market rental of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £975.00 pcm. 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.
16. From this level of rent, no adjustments have been made.

Undue hardship

12. 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.
13. The Tenant has asked the Tribunal to fix a later starting date in this case. He says that he lives on his own with his 4 year old daughter, that he is employed full time but his income is spent on essentials and the cost of living has hit really hard and that his budget is incredibly tight.
14. The Landlord did not respond to the Tenant's application for postponement due to hardship.
15. As a result of our decision the rent will increase by £20 a month. The date specified in the landlord's notice was 13 May 2026. No evidence in support was provided to the Tribunal. Although the Tribunal has every sympathy with the Tenant's predicament, in the absence of any evidence to support a claim for undue hardship 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 as at the date of the Notice that being for the new rent as 13 May 2026.

Decision

16. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at ~~£975.00~~ £995.00 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.