



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

**Case Reference**

**MAN/00BL/MNR/2026/0336**

**Property**

**49 Stokers Drive, Horwich, Bolton  
BL6 5XB**

**Tenants**

**Paul Dempsey and Stephanie McGreavy**

**Tenant's Representative**

**Landlord**

**UK PRS Lettings LLP**

**Landlord's Address**

**Stafford Court, 145 Washway Road,  
Manchester, M33 7PE**

**Landlord's Representative**

**Ascend Estates Limited  
Stafford Court, 145 Washway Road,  
Manchester, M33 7PE**

**Date of Application**

**4 June 2026**

**Type of Application**

**Determination of an Open-Market Rent  
sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988**

**Tribunal Members**

**Judge V Lloyd  
Mr D Hunt MRICS**

**Date of Decision**

**23 July 2026**

**Rent Determined**

**£1,275 per calendar month**

|                                       |                    |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Date the new rent takes effect</b> | <b>4 July 2026</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|

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## **REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

### **Background**

1. On 29 April 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,325.00 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £1,150.00 pcm to take effect from 4 July 2026.
2. On 4 June 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 4 April 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 and the costs relating to the same.**

5. There are no service charges payable under the tenancy and no furniture provided by the Landlord.

### **Liability for Council Tax**

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

### **Inspection/Hearing**

7. Neither party requested an oral hearing or an inspection of the Property. 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 newly built semi-detached house offering three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen, a bathroom, a garage to the rear and two parking spaces at the front.
9. The Property is located in the Barton Quarter, a residential estate developed on the site of the former Horwich Locomotive Works. The neighbourhood offers good access to the M61 motorway and is close to Horwich Parkway railway station. Middlebrook Retail & Leisure Park is located almost immediately to the south-east of the estate.

## **Evidence**

10. The Tenants have proposed a monthly market rent of £1,200 pcm. They object to Landlord's proposed increase in rent of c. 17%. The Tenants do not provide any other evidence in support of their proposed market rent.
11. The Landlord returned the Tribunal's reply form. They state that "*the revised rent of £1,275 pcm remains below the current market rate for comparable properties within the same [specification] and within a 3-mile radius, where similar units are currently being marketed and let at above the requested rent increase. The proposed increase from £1,150 pcm to £1,275 pcm therefore reflects current market conditions while still positioning the property below comparable rents in the area.*"
12. The following comparables were provided by the Landlord, all three-bedroom properties, within a three-mile radius of the subject Property and marketed between 16 March to 16 June 2026:
  - a) 14 Semi-Detached properties ranging from £1,325 pcm to £1,450 pcm;
  - b) 3 terraced properties ranging from £1,375 pcm to £1,395 pcm;
  - c) A town house advertised at £1,350 pcm;
  - d) A mews house advertised at £1,400 pcm; and
  - e) A detached house advertised at £1,350 pcm.
13. The Tenants did not reply to the Landlord's reply and market rental evidence.

## **Determination and Valuation**

14. The Landlord revised its proposed market rent from £1,325 pcm as set out in their notice to £1,275 pcm as set out in their reply. While the Landlord's comparables were advertised at rents between £1,325 and £1,450 pcm, the Tribunal recognises that advertised rents do not necessarily equate to achieved

rents and that adjustments must be made for differences in type, location, specification and market conditions. Having regard to those matters, and using its own expertise, the Tribunal considers that the evidence supports a market rent no lower than £1,275 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 Property and unfurnished.

15. The Tribunal has considered the Tenants' proposed rent of £1,200 pcm but attaches limited weight to that figure because no supporting market evidence was provided and it is materially below the level indicated by the available comparable evidence. The Tribunal notes that the Tenants were given the opportunity to comment on the Landlord's comparable evidence but did not do so.

### **Undue hardship**

16. The new rent takes effect from the date specified in the Landlord's Notice of Increase unless that would cause undue hardship to the Tenants. 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.
17. The Tenants set out in their application that they have a son who may have autism and they have had to change work schedules to accommodate all his appointments and schooling needs. They said they would experience hardship if they had to find another £175 per month plus the increase in council tax liability. They did not provide any documentary evidence in support of their claim that a rent increase would cause hardship.
18. The Landlord, in their reply form, acknowledged the Tenants' representations but replied that "*no supporting evidence has been provided to substantiate a claim of hardship. We therefore have no evidence for the Tribunal to take into account in relation to hardship beyond the [Tenants'] own statement.*"
19. As a result of our decision the rent will increase by £125 pcm. The date specified in the Landlord's notice was 4 July 2026. The Tribunal accepts that an increase in rent may create financial pressure for the Tenants. However, it has been provided with no information regarding financial circumstances. In the absence of evidence enabling the Tribunal to assess the extent of any hardship, it is not satisfied that implementation of the new rent from 4 July 2026 would cause undue hardship. Caselaw gives authority that a mere assertion of undue hardship would not be sufficient (*Anderson v Kokins & Kokina [2024] UKUT 0091 (LC)*). The Tribunal has insufficient evidence to conclude that implementation of the new rent from 4 July 2026 would cause undue hardship.

## **Decision**

20. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £1,275.00 per calendar month with effect from 4 July 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.