

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	HAV/45UH/MNR/2026/0199
Property	Flat 2, 15 Ambrose Place, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1PZ
Tenant	Jake Messingham
Tenant's Representative	n/a
Landlord	Slasco Properties Limited
Landlord's Address	6 Station Parade, Tarring Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 4SS
Landlord's Representative	Crowding Bricks
Date of Application	29th June 2026
Type of Application	Determination of an Open-Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Judge David Cowan – Chair Colin Davies FRICS
Date of Decision	3rd August 2026
Rent Determined	£650
Date the new rent takes effect	15th July 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 30th April 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13 (2) (as amended) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £757.90 per month in place of the existing rent of £625 per month to take effect from 15th July 2026.
2. On 29th 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 tenancy commenced on or around 15th September 2021 for a fixed term of one year. The rental period is monthly.

Validity Of Notice – Section 13 of the Housing Act 1988

4. In their application form, the Tenant indicated that they believed that the Landlord's notice was valid.

Allocation of Repairs between Landlord and Tenant.

5. 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.

6. The Tenant states that no furniture is provided by the Landlord.
7. The Tenant stated that the rent included charges for utilities of £80 pcm. However, on considering the Landlord's response and the tenancy agreement, the Tribunal could not find any evidence to substantiate that assertion.

Liability for Council Tax

8. 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.

9. No other terms of the tenancy were taken into consideration in determining the rent.

Hearing

10. Neither party requested an oral hearing. The Tribunal has considered this case on the basis of the papers provided by the Tenant and the Landlord, and its own knowledge and specialist expertise.

The Property

11. The Property is a ground floor flat, offering the following accommodation:

Property: studio room, bathroom

The property has storage heaters.

The Property is situated within a three storey block in a residential area of Worthing.

Evidence

12. The Tenant made the following comments:
- a) The Tenant states that the proposed increase in rent is unaffordable for him given the local housing allowance.
 - b) Although the landlord has refurbished other properties in the building, the property itself has not been refurbished.
 - c) The ceiling in the property has been damaged by multiple leaks, and there has been damage to the bathroom as a result of leaks.
 - d) The storage heaters are rusty and are too expensive to run.
 - e) A door warps in winter.
 - f) He is disabled and his health is declining. He cannot find anywhere cheaper which will fit his bed. He has been on the local authority waiting list for a decade.
13. The Landlord responded:
- a) While they recognised the tenant's financial situation, the proposed market rent was fair. Average rents for rooms in an HMO are now £700pcm, and the cheapest studio flat is £800pcm.
 - b) The building is centrally located in Worthing, and the property is self-contained.

Determination and Valuation

14. The Tribunal considered all the information provided by the parties, and noted that the Landlord had not provided evidence of its comparables. The Tribunal recognised that there had been a general increase in rents in the area.
15. The Tribunal's role is to determine the market rent independently of the resources available to, and the health of, the Tenant.
16. Relying on its own expertise and general knowledge of rental values in the area, the Tribunal considers that the market rent of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £750 pcm. This is the rent we would expect the property to let for in the open market at the valuation date and if it was in the same general condition as the comparable properties.
17. The Tribunal paid particular attention to the photographic evidence supplied by the Tenant, and noted that it corresponded with the Tenant's submissions.
18. Additionally, the Tribunal considered the publicly available energy performance certificate for the property which is rated as E.
19. From this level of rent, the Tribunal has made adjustments in relation to the following:
 - a) Aged heating appliances and poor insulation
 - b) The state of repair of the property

The full valuation is shown below:

Starting Rent		<u>£750 pm</u>
<u>Less</u>		
a)	Items given under a) above	£25
b)	Items given under b) above	£75
Open-Market Rent		£650 pcm

Undue hardship

20. 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.

21. The Tenant has asked the Tribunal to fix a later starting date in this case. The Tenant says they will be caused undue hardship because of their ill-health and disability, and their universal credit payments will not cover the increase in rent.
22. The landlord responded that affordability is not a factor in determining market rent, and the tenant could apply for social security to meet the proposed market rent.
23. Given that the increase determined by the Tribunal is £25 more than the current rent, and the Tenant has not supplied evidence, the Tribunal does not find undue hardship

Decision

24. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £650.00 per calendar month with effect from 15th 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 (rule 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.