

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	MAN/00CE/MRA/2026/0072
Property	5 Avondale Road, Doncaster, DN2 6DE
Tenant	Pauline Domenico
Tenant's Representative	None
Landlord	Beverley Wiggett
Landlord's Address	17a Sandringham Road, Doncaster, DN2 5HU,
Landlord's Representative	Northwood Doncaster Limited
Date of Application	21 July 2026
Type of Application	Determination of a Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Colin Green (Legal Chair) Ken Kasambara (Valuer Member)
Date of Decision	20 August 2026
Rent Determined	£820.00 per calendar month
Date the new rent takes effect	20 October 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. Under a tenancy agreement between the parties dated 6 March 2025, an assured tenancy was granted of the Property for a term from and including 6 March 2025 to and including 5 September 2025. The rental period is monthly.
2. On 2 July 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 (as amended) which proposed a new rent of £825.00 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £795.00 pcm to take effect from 6 September 2026.
3. On 21 July 2026, under Section 14 (A3) of the Housing Act 1988, the Tenant referred the Landlord's notice proposing a new rent to the Tribunal for determination of an open-market rent.

Allocation of Repairs between Landlord and Tenant

4. As per the tenancy agreement and section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

Services Charges or furniture provided by Landlord (other than any 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

Hearing and Inspection

8. Neither party requested an oral hearing or an inspection. The Tenant's application included photographs of the Property both internal and external.

The Tribunal is satisfied that it can properly consider this case based on the papers provided by the parties and its own knowledge and specialist expertise.

The Property

9. The Property is a semi-detached house, comprising on the ground floor, an entrance hall, kitchen, living room and conservatory, and on the first floor two bedrooms and a bathroom/WC, a total of 689 square feet. There is rear garden with a shed, and a small grass area at the front of the Property but no driveway or off-road parking.
10. Internally, the Property has carpeted flooring throughout the majority of the rooms, including the bedrooms, stairs and living area. The carpets are fitted but are not new and show general signs of age and wear. The kitchen has a tile-effect floor covering (pressed wood/fibreboard-style material) which has suffered water damage and shows signs of wear. The conservatory has a wood-effect plastic/laminate-style flooring finish. The Property benefits from double-glazed windows throughout and gas central heating.

Evidence

11. The parties completed the relevant MR1 (Tenant), MR2 (Landlord) and MR3 (Tenant's reply) forms.

The Tenant

12. The Tenant made the following comments.
 - a) Concerning the condition of the Property, she reported significant black mould and other disrepair issues to Doncaster Council after repeated delays in repairs. Following the Council's involvement, a Hazard Awareness Notice was issued and the Landlord subsequently carried out the works, which took approximately six months to complete. The Landlord's notice of increase was served approximately five weeks after those works were completed. It should be noted however, that the Tribunal is determining the market rent for the Property as of 6 September 2026, the date of increase. The Tenant accepts that the required remedial works have been completed and the Tribunal is unable to assess the market rent having regard to the previous condition of the Property.

- b) The Tenant states that the conservatory is not insulated and cannot reasonably be considered equivalent to permanent living accommodation throughout the year. She has provided a photo of the conservatory, which shows a sofa, some hanging plants, some stored items, and children's toys. This suggests that the conservatory can be used in the summer months but that in cold weather it is closed off or its use is limited. That is common with conservatories of this nature.
- c) The Tenant states that she has painted the Property, presumably internally as the paintwork to the front of the Property is in poor condition.
- d) In terms of rental evidence, the Tenant has not produced any comparables other than to state that Northwood Estates' website shows some comparable properties of 2 bedrooms and 1 bathroom renting at £675.00 and £700.00 pcm, but no details are provided. The Tenant has commented on the Landlord's comparables however, dealt with below.

The Landlord

- 13. The Landlord relies on a report produced by its agent, covering a one-mile radius of the Property's postcode for the period May 2025 to May 2026, in respect of all property types. This shows an average achieved rent of £721.00 pcm, an average rent per square foot of £12.74, and a range of rents (10% to 90%) of £575.00 to £950.00 pcm. Such averages in respect of all property types are of no real assistance in assessing a market rent for a specific property.
- 14. In addition, there are specific comparables relied on stated to be two-bedroom, semi-detached properties, within a mile of the Property. The Tenant's comments are shown in italics.
 - a) 33 Dundas Road, Doncaster DN2 4DS at £775.00 pcm. *This is 1.4 miles from the Property and 786 square feet.*
 - b) Wolsey Avenue, Doncaster DN2 at £800.00 pcm. *This is 926 square feet – significantly larger – with a gated driveway, two large bathrooms and a utility room.*

- c) Morgan Road Doncaster at £825.00 pcm. *This has two bathrooms, was recently renovated, has wood flooring, and appears to have a driveway.*
- d) 3 Chequer Avenue, Doncaster DN4 5AR at £775.00. *This is 1.3 miles away in a different postcode, 753 square feet, and has a driveway. It is listed by the landlord twice, at £775.00 and £800.00.*
- e) Paddock View, Doncaster at £875.00. *This is a new build development (the Property was built in about 1930), has two bathrooms, a driveway/private parking, new carpets and is a town centre location.*
- f) 69 Aintree Avenue, Doncaster DN4 6HH at £750.00. *This is 1.9 miles away, is 764 square feet, has a large bathroom and a driveway.*
- g) 39 Argyll Avenue, Doncaster DN2 6LQ at £850.00 pcm. *The Land Registry identifies three bedrooms and it is 893 square feet.*
- h) In comparison to the above, the Tenant states that the Property was built in about 1930, is 689 square feet, has no driveway or off-road parking, has a single compact bathroom, and there is an uninsulated conservatory which cannot be used all-year round.

Determination and Valuation

15. The Tribunal notes what the Tenant says concerning the Internet search she carried out but she has not provided the results of her search, making comparison difficult and the range of £675.00 and £700.00 pcm seems exceptionally low given that her current rent of £795.00 pcm was agreed in only March 2025. So far as the Landlord's comparables are concerned, it is accepted that they are of larger properties, some more so than others, and in the case of Paddock View, a new build. They do provide a context however, and having regard to that and relying on its own expert, general knowledge of rental values in the area, the Tribunal considers that the market rental of the Property, modernised and in good order, would be £850.00 pcm. 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 the comparable properties.

16. From this level of rent, the Tribunal has made an adjustment of £30.00 to reflect the state of the exterior painting and small bathroom and the wear and tear and water damage mentioned in paragraph 10 above, producing a final figure of £820.00 pcm.

Undue hardship

17. The new rent takes effect from the date of increase or the date which is the beginning of the first new period of the tenancy which begins on or after the date of the determination, whichever is later (here they are the same: 6 September 2026) 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 two months after it makes its determination.
18. The Tenant has asked the Tribunal to fix a later starting date in this case. She receives Universal Credit and Child Benefit and does not currently have employment income. She has a young child and a limited household budget. An increase from £795.00 to £825.00 per month would place additional financial pressure on the household and reduce her ability to meet essential living expenses such as food, energy bills and other necessities. Her financial circumstances are such that even a relatively modest increase in rent would cause hardship.
19. In support the Tenant has provided details of her monthly income of £1,228.00, consisting of £424.90 standard allowance, the maximum Local Housing Allowance of £500.00, and £303.94 child benefit. The Tenant has savings and investments of £3,213.23.
20. The Landlord did not respond to the Tenant's application for postponement due to hardship.
21. As a result of the Tribunal's decision the rent will increase by £25.00 per month. Based on the evidence supplied by the Tenant, the Tribunal considers that for the increase to take effect from 6 September 2026 would cause undue hardship and accordingly sets the starting date for the new rent as 20 October 2026.

Decision

22. The Tribunal determines the new rent amount at £820.00 pcm with effect from 20 October 2026 as this is lower than the proposed rent of £825.00 pcm.

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.