

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	MAN/00EJ/MRA/2026/0034
Property	29 Pilgrims Way, Durham DH1 1HB
Tenant	Muath Moh'd Ahmad Masri & Sara Laabid
Tenant's Representative	
Landlord	Amarjit Singh
Landlord's Address	7-9 Gort Place, Gilesgate, Durham DH1 1EY
Landlord's Representative	Nicholas Humphreys Estate Agents
Date of Application	28 June 2026
Type of Application	Determination of an Open-Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Mr N Swain MRICS – Chair Ms J Chisholm
Date of Decision	13 August 2026
Rent Determined	£1300.00 per calendar month
Date of Valuation	21 September 2026
Date the new rent takes effect	21 September 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 23 June 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13 (2) (as amended) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1700.00 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £1200.00 pcm to take effect from 21 September 2026.
2. On 28 June 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.
3. The tenancy commenced on 21 September 2025. 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. A range of basic furniture items are provided with the Property.

Liability for Council Tax

6. The Tenant 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.

7. None.

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 semi-detached house, offering the following accommodation:

Property: Hall, kitchen, living room, dining room, utility room, integral garage that has been converted to living space, three bedrooms and bathroom with a full suite.

Outside: Garden and driveway to the front, yard and shed to rear.

The Property benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, a range of white goods and flooring throughout.

The Property is situated in the Gilesgate area of Durham, within close proximity to local amenities. Durham city centre is approximately 1 mile to the south west.

Evidence

10. The parties completed the relevant MR1 (tenant), MR2 (landlord) and MR3 (tenant's reply).

The Tenant

11. The Tenant made the following comments:

- a) The fridge is unusually small for a property of this size, and the oven was so heavily soiled that it has been unusable.
- b) Toilet seat has yellow staining, and the shower head has visible rust.
- c) They noted that various furniture items were marked or stained.
- d) The letting agent had referred to it as a two bedroom student let, not four bedroom property as now claimed.

12. The Tenant provided extracts from Rightmove property portal for a range of two and three bedroom properties in and around Durham city, with rents ranging from £823.00 to £995.00 pcm.

The Landlord

13. The Landlord made the following comments:
 - a) The Property is a four bedroom student let but they agreed to let it to the Tenant on the basis of just two occupants. It has a large garden as well.
 - b) The Property was professionally cleaned both before and shortly after the Tenant took up occupation.
14. The Landlord provided extracts from various property portals for student lets in and around Durham, with rents in the range of £1700.00 to £2880.00 pcm.

Determination and Valuation

15. Whilst the Landlord chose to let the Property to two people, the Property is a four bedroom property and the Tribunal has determined the rental value on that basis.
16. Whilst the Tenant's comparables have a degree of use, they are all for two or three bedroom properties. Therefore, the weight given to them is reduced significantly. The Landlord's comparables, in the main, appear to be for student HMOs, being let on a per person basis. Little detail has been given on each property and letting to students on this basis is known to attract a premium. The other two properties appear to be more substantial and/or better located than this Property. Therefore, the weight given to all of the Landlord's comparables is significantly reduced.
17. Relying on its own expertise and general knowledge of rental values in the area, and the comparables provided by the Landlord and the Tenant, the Tribunal considers that the market rent of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £1300.00 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.
18. The Tribunal did not consider that any adjustments to the rental value were necessary.

Open-Market Rent**£1300.00 pcm**

Decision

19. The Tribunal determines the new rent amount at £1300.00 per calendar month with effect from 21 September 2026 which is the beginning of the first new period of the tenancy which begins on or after the date of the determination.

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.