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|  | <b>FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL<br/>PROPERTY CHAMBER<br/>(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)</b>           |
| <b>Case Reference</b>                                                             | <b>CAM-26UJ-MRA-2026-0019</b>                                                          |
| <b>Property</b>                                                                   | <b>3 Fellowes House, Caravan Lane,<br/>Rickmansworth WD3 1FT</b>                       |
| <b>Tenant</b>                                                                     | <b>Roxanne Castree</b>                                                                 |
| <b>Tenant's Representative</b>                                                    | <b>N/A</b>                                                                             |
| <b>Landlord</b>                                                                   | <b>Anna-Mari Nykanen-Fernandez</b>                                                     |
| <b>Landlord's Address</b>                                                         | <b>55 Bateman Road, Croxley Green,<br/>Rickmansworth, WD3 3BL</b>                      |
| <b>Landlord's Representative</b>                                                  | <b>N/A</b>                                                                             |
| <b>Date of Application</b>                                                        | <b>6 July 2026</b>                                                                     |
| <b>Type of Application</b>                                                        | <b>Determination of a Market Rent<br/>sections 13 &amp; 14 of the Housing Act 1988</b> |
| <b>Tribunal Members</b>                                                           | <b>Judge A. Arul<br/>Patrick McGreal MRICS</b>                                         |
| <b>Date of Decision</b>                                                           | <b>25 August 2026</b>                                                                  |
| <b>Rent Determined</b>                                                            | <b>£1,900 per calendar month</b>                                                       |
| <b>Date the new rent takes effect</b>                                             | <b>24 September 2026</b>                                                               |

## **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 £1,950 per calendar month (pcm) in place of the existing rent of £1,900 pcm to take effect from 24 September 2026.
2. On 6 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 a market rent.
3. The assured tenancy commenced on 24 May 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. 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 first floor flat in a modern four storey block offering the following accommodation:

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, open plan living room/kitchen. The internal residential floor area is approximately 776 sq ft.

Outside: private balcony, allocated covered parking space and access to shared rooftop terrace.

The Property is situated in the town of Rickmansworth, in south-west Hertfordshire. It is located about half a mile from the town's mainline railway station and central amenities and conveniently located for the M25.

## **Evidence**

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

### *The Tenant.*

11. The Tenant made the following comments. They considered the proposed rent of £1,950 to be excessive and contended that the market rent was £1,850 pcm. They stated that the gas hob has been replaced but confirmation of the safety of the new hob had not yet been provided to them. They acknowledged use of the communal roof terrace but stated that this does not have any protection from the elements and residents cannot leave furniture there. The Tenant maintained that the open market rent should be assessed by reference to the Property and appropriate market evidence rather than the Landlord's operating costs. The Tenant provided comments on the Landlord's comparable evidence, which is discussed below.
12. In relation to rental evidence, the Tenant provided several comparables which they said supported the contended for market rent of £1,850 pcm. A summary was provided including photographs that appear to have been extracted from electronic letting particulars. The actual particulars were not submitted to the Tribunal. The summaries did not identify if the advertised lettings were furnished or unfurnished. The comparables were as follows:
- a. Penn Place - A 2-bedroom flat advertised at £1,850 pcm and also benefiting from a private garage, private balcony, additional storage area and concierge service. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 694 sq ft with a separate garage of approximately 194 sq ft.

- b. High Street - A 2-bedroom flat advertised at £1,850 pcm and also benefiting from 2 bathrooms, large balcony with views of the River Chess, allocated parking, communal grounds and close proximity to Rickmansworth Station and local amenities. It is located within approximately 0.55 km of the subject property. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 689 sq ft.
- c. Salters Close - A 2-bedroom flat advertised at £1,850 pcm and also benefiting from a modern finish, south-facing private balcony with views of the River Chess, two allocated parking spaces, a modern finish and close proximity to Rickmansworth Station and local amenities.
- d. Walkers House, Caravan Lane - A 2-bedroom flat advertised at £1,675 pcm in the same development and sharing key characteristics with the subject property.

*The Landlord.*

- 13. In relation to the allegation concerning condition, the Landlord said that the gas hob was renewed promptly and that the Tenant did not raise any safety concern following the renewal.
- 14. In relation to rental evidence, the Landlord provided several comparables together with observations on the Tenant's comparables. The comparables were as follows:
  - a. Langwood House - A 2-bedroom top floor flat advertised at £2,200 pcm and also benefiting from 2 bathrooms and being furnished. It is situated within a 4-storey block. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 702 sq ft.
  - b. Coach House - A 2-bedroom first floor flat advertised at £1,975 pcm and also benefiting from 1 bathroom. It is situated within a modern 2-storey block. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 492 sq ft.
  - c. Drake House - A 2-bedroom first floor flat advertised at £1,950 pcm and also benefiting from 1 bathroom and being furnished or unfurnished. It is situated within a modern 4-storey block. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 467 sq ft.
  - d. Victoria Close - A 2-bedroom ground floor flat advertised at £2,000 pcm and also benefiting from 2 bathrooms. It is situated within a modern 2-storey block. Its internal residential floor area is approximately 868 sq ft.
- 15. The Landlord's comparables were all in close proximity to the town centre. The Landlord contended that £1,950 pcm was reasonable having regard to market

rental prices. The Landlord made observations concerning some of the Tenant's comparables being higher in rent when assessed by reference to size.

16. In response, the Tenant invited the Tribunal to consider the features and benefits attached to each comparable and not to consider size in isolation from those other features and benefits.

### **Determination and Valuation**

17. The Tribunal considered the evidence of condition, which was limited to the issue of gas safety. This appears to have been dealt with satisfactorily and is not considered to influence the current market value of the Property.
18. The Tribunal is grateful for the information on comparables provided by the parties, which can be summarised as follows:

| Address         | Rent pcm         | Area sq ft | Rent /sq ft pcm                       | Comment                                      |
|-----------------|------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 3 Fellows House | £1,900 (current) | 776        | £2.45<br>Proposed rent would be £2.51 | Subject property<br>Current rent             |
| Penn Place      | £1,850           | 694        | £2.67                                 | Tenant's comparable<br>Near subject property |
| High Street     | £1,850           | 689        | £2.69                                 | Tenant's comparable<br>Near subject property |
| Salters Close   | £1,850           | Not stated |                                       | Tenant's comparable<br>Further from station  |
| Walkers House   | £1,675           | 613        | £2.73                                 | Tenant's comparable<br>Further from station  |
| Langwood House  | £2,200           | 702        | £3.13                                 | Landlord's comparable<br>Town centre         |
| Coach House     | £1,975           | 492        | £4.01                                 | Landlord's comparable<br>By station          |
| Drake House     | £1,950           | 467        | £4.18                                 | Landlord's comparable<br>By station          |
| Victoria Close  | £2,000           | 868        | £2.30                                 | Landlord's comparable<br>By station          |

19. The Tribunal was mindful that full particulars were not available for all comparables and that the rents stated were all asking rents save for the actual rent of the subject Property. The actual achieved rent on each letting may differ.
20. The Tribunal was also mindful that, although some of the comparables had a lower price per square foot, this may be influenced by the size of properties e.g., larger properties may represent better value on a per square foot basis. Assessing

square foot values provides a useful guide however an overly simplistic analysis does not reflect variations in terms of location, parking/garage, specification and other variables. A significant difference between the comparables was the block within each flat is situated, which were in different sizes and styles. To draw any meaningful conclusion requires making subjective adjustments to each comparable and, in many cases, the level of adjustment would make the end result meaningless. A clear picture of value therefore does not emerge from the table.

21. Some of the comparables were within the town centre and/or very close to the High Street and/or the train station, with its links to London. The subject Property is on the outskirts of the town centre, which may be reflected by a slightly lower rental value.
22. One comparable which the Tribunal looked closer at was Walker House. This was in close proximity to the Property, being in the same road (Caravan Lane) and appeared to be of similar age, but the block is a different style. It provides similar accommodation to the Property and is of a similar specification. However, it is located on the third floor of the block and is not serviced by a lift. More importantly, it provides 163 sq ft less floor area making it significantly smaller than the subject Property. To bring this on all fours with the subject Property would require subjective adjustments that, for the reasons stated above, the Tribunal did not consider necessary.
23. One piece of evidence that the parties appear to have overlooked is the letting of the subject Property in May 2025 at £1,900 pcm. This can be taken to be an undisputed rental value under which the Property is currently occupied. The Tribunal considers this the best guide to the open market rent of the Property. Since that letting is now approximately fifteen months old it is appropriate to consider if the rent has increased since then. No evidence was provided by either party to address this question and, having regard to the conflicting comparable evidence presented by the parties, the Tribunal considers this is the current open market rent and determines the matter accordingly.
24. Having regard to the size and location of the Property 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 would be in the region of £1,900 pcm. This is the rent we would expect the Property to be let for in the open market.

**Market rent**

**£1,900 pcm**

### **Undue hardship**

25. The new rent takes effect from the later of the date in the Landlord's Notice 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 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.

26. The Tenant has not asked the Tribunal to fix a later starting date in this case.
27. As a result of the Tribunal's decision, the rent will not increase. The date specified in the Landlord's notice was 24 September 2026. On the basis of the evidence supplied by the Tenant, the Tribunal considers that for the new rent to take effect from the date in the Landlord's Notice would not cause undue hardship (not least as it is the same as existing) and accordingly sets the starting date for the new rent as 24 September 2026.

### **Decision**

28. Therefore, the Tribunal determines the market rent at £1,900 per calendar month with effect from 24 September 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.