

	FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL PROPERTY CHAMBER (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Case Reference	MAN/00EJ/MNR/2026/0364
Property	2 Dale View Cottages, St Helen Auckland, Bishop Auckland Durham DL14 9BL
Tenant	Sandra Hauxwell Mark Walker
Tenant's Representative	N/A
Landlord	Mark Stevenson
Landlord's Address	327 Filey Road, Scarborough YO11 3OJ
Landlord's Representative	Jessica Ward, The Insight Group
Date of Application	20 July 2026
Type of Application	Determination of an Open-Market Rent sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act 1988
Tribunal Members	Judge R Anderson Mr N Foster FRICS
Date of Decision	10 September 2026
Rent Determined	£600 per calendar month
Date of Valuation	10 September 2026
Date the new rent takes effect	12 September 2026

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. On 9 April 2026, the Landlord served a notice under Section 13 (2) (as amended) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £630.00 per calendar month(pcm) in place of the existing rent of £ 550.00 pcm to take effect from 12 July 2026.
2. On 20 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.
3. The tenancy commenced on 12 March 2017. The rental period is monthly commencing on twelfth day of each month.

Allocation of Repairs between Landlord and Tenant.

4. As per section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1988

Liability for Council Tax

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

Hearing

6. 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

7. The Property is a semi-detached bungalow with two bedrooms, one kitchen, one bathroom, a living room and a utility room.
8. The Property is situated in the village of St Helen Auckland in County Durham.

Evidence

9. The parties completed the relevant MR1 (tenant) and MR2 (landlord).

The Tenant

10. The Tenant submitted that the current rent was determined by a Tribunal and that an increase of £80 pcm was excessive but an increase of £50 pcm to £600 was realistic.
11. The Tenant did not provide any comparable rental evidence.

The Landlord

12. The Landlord's representative provided a copy of correspondence to the Tenant in which they indicated that they considered £600.00 pcm to be an acceptable rent.
13. The Landlord did not provide comparable rental evidence.

Determination and Valuation

14. Under section 14(1) of the Housing Act 1988 (as amended), the Tribunal is required to determine the rent at which the Property might reasonably be expected to let in the open market by a willing Landlord at the beginning of the new period specified in the Landlord's notice. Relevant Tenant improvements or failure of the Tenant to comply with the terms of the tenancy are to be disregarded. Historic issues relating to the tenancy or the personal circumstances of the Landlord are not taken into account. The personal circumstances of the Tenant are only considered if an application for hardship has been made.
15. Relying on its own expertise and general knowledge of rental values in the area (particularly the market's increase since the last determination), the indications made by the parties and the previous determination the Tribunal considers that the market rent of the subject Property modernised and in good order would be in the order of £ 600.00 pcm. This is the rent we would expect the property to let for in the open market at the valuation date.
16. the Tribunal found it was not necessary to make any adjustments in relation to Tenant improvements or disrepair.

Decision

17. The Tribunal determines the new rent amount at £600.00 per calendar month with effect from 12 September 2026 which is the beginning of the first new period of the tenancy which begins on or after the date of the determination.

Judge R Anderson

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 after 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.

