	**FIRST - TIER TRIBUNAL** **PROPERTY CHAMBER** **(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)**
Case Reference	**MAN/30UL/MRB/2026/0002**
Property	**39 Hall Barn Drive, Longridge, Preston, Lancashire, PR3 2ZA**
Tenant	**Angela May**
Tenant's Representative	**None**
Landlord	**Seddon Investments Limited**
Landlord's Address	**10 Towneley Parade, Longridge, Preston, Lancashire PR3 3HU**
Landlord's Representative	**Dewhurst Homes Limited**
Date of Application	**19 July 2026**
Type of Application	**Determination of a Market Rent under section 14 of the Housing Act 1988**
Tribunal Members	**Colin Green (Legal Chairman)** **Joanna Bissett FRICS (Valuer Member)**
Date of Decision	**18 September 2026**
Rent Determined	**£1,200.00 per calendar month**
Date the new rent takes effect	**25 July 2026**

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REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Background

1. Under a tenancy agreement between the parties dated 25 February 2026, an assured tenancy was granted of the Property for a term of 12 months commencing on 25 February 2026. The rental period is monthly with the rent of £1,350.00 per calendar month (pcm) payable in advance on the 25th day of each month. Under s. 4A of the Housing Act 1988 (as amended) the tenancy will have been converted to a monthly periodic tenancy from 1 May 2026.

2. On 19 July 2026, under Section 14(A1) of the 1988 Act (as amended), the Tenant applied to the Tribunal for the purpose of challenging the rent payable under the tenancy. The rent payable is not pursuant to a previous determination under Section 14, and less than six months had elapsed since the beginning of the tenancy when the application was made.

Allocation of Repairs between Landlord and Tenant

3. 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

4. None.

Liability for Council Tax

5. 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

6. None.

Hearing & Inspection

7. Neither party requested an oral hearing or an inspection. 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

8. According to the Tenant's application, the Property is a semi-detached, two-bedroom bungalow, approximately 528ft². There are gas central heating and double glazing throughout. There are fitted carpets to the bedrooms and living area, with tiling to the kitchen and bathroom. The Property was let without curtains or other window coverings, without a washing machine, wardrobes or bedroom storage, and without decorative light fittings; only basic bulb holders were provided. There are a rear garden and a garage. No other separate buildings or land are included in the tenancy.

Evidence

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

The Tenant

10. The Tenant made the following comments. She considers the open market rent to be approximately £1,000.00 pcm. The current rent of £1,350.00 pcm is significantly higher than the evidence now available for directly comparable properties on the same development. The approved master site plan identifies the Property as Plot 33 and records it as a small 2-bedroom bungalow of approximately 528ft². Plots 32 and 34, corresponding to 41 and 37 Hall Barn Drive, are recorded as the same size and property type and are therefore direct comparators. These directly comparable bungalows were originally marketed at £1,350.00 and £1,300.00 pcm but were subsequently reduced to £1,200.00 pcm after extended periods of vacancy. The letting agent has confirmed that the reductions were made to encourage interest and secure tenants more quickly. They remain advertised at the reduced rent, which suggests that even £1,200.00 pcm is an asking rent rather than an achieved market rent and may still be above the level supported by the market.

11. The Property is also minimally equipped. It was let without curtains or window coverings, a washing machine, wardrobes or decorative light fittings. Wider local evidence also shows larger and better-equipped detached bungalows advertised at approximately £1,200.00 pcm, while a substantially larger property on the same development has been marketed for only £45.00 pcm more than the Tenant's current rent. For these reasons, she does not consider £1,350.00 pcm to represent the open market rent and believes that approximately £1,000.00 pcm is a fairer assessment. The Tribunal is asked to determine the appropriate rent based on the direct comparator evidence, continued vacancies, property size, specification and wider local market evidence.

12. When the Tenant agreed to the tenancy, the agent knew that she needed to relocate urgently to start a new job in less than a week. She asked whether the advertised rent could be negotiated, but this was refused. Because of the limited time available to secure accommodation before commencing employment, the Tenant proceeded at £1,350.00 pcm. Her acceptance of that figure was therefore influenced by the urgency of her relocation and should not, by itself, be treated as evidence that £1,350.00 pcm represented the open market rent.

13. Further recent market evidence includes two, two-bedroom bungalows marketed at £950.00 pcm in June 2026 and subsequently marked "Let" or "Let agreed". One is in Langho within Ribble Valley and the other is in New Longton within South Ribble. These examples provide further evidence that good-quality two-bedroom bungalow accommodation in the wider local Lancashire market is being secured at around £950.00 pcm, supporting the Tenant's proposed market rent of £1,000 pcm.

14. The comparables provided by the Tenant are as follows:

a) Hall Barn Drive, Longridge, a two-bedroom bungalow, at £1,200.00 pcm;

b) Moorland Road, Langho, Blackburn, a two-bedroom bungalow, at £950.00 pcm;

c) Hall Barn Drive, a two-bedroom bungalow, at £1,200.00 pcm;

d) The Vinery, New Longton, a two-bedroom bungalow, at £950.00 pcm.

The Landlord

15. The Landlord responded as follows. Its position is that the open market rent for the Property is £1,350.00 pcm, being the rent agreed between the parties at the commencement of the tenancy. The Landlord disagrees that the evidence provided by the Tenant supports a market rent of £1,000.00 pcm. The Tenant relies primarily on asking prices and marketing reductions rather than achieved rents. The properties cited outside the development are located in different areas and are not direct comparables. The Property is a modern bungalow on a new development and was openly marketed before the tenancy commenced. The Landlord expects the Tenant to continue with the agreed rent of £1,350.00 pcm.

16. In addition, the tenancy commenced on 25 February 2026 at a rent of £1,350.00 pcm, following open market advertising of the Property. The Property was marketed at £1,350.00 pcm, generating 15 enquiries and 9 viewings, and a tenancy was subsequently agreed at the full asking rent. This demonstrates market acceptance of the rent at the time the tenancy was granted. The Tenant has made monthly payments of £1,350.00 since then. However, £1,000.00 was received on 29th July 2026, so the Tenant is currently £350.00 in arrears. The Landlord considers that the evidence relied upon by the Tenant does not support a market rent of £1,000.00 pcm. A significant proportion of the evidence relates to asking rents, reduced marketing prices, or properties located outside the immediate area, including Langho and New Longton. Asking rents and marketing reductions do not necessarily reflect achieved market rents.

17. The Tenant seeks a reduction from £1,350.00 to £1,000.00 pcm, representing a reduction of approximately 26%. The Landlord does not consider that such a reduction is supported by the available market evidence. The Tenant also relies upon marketing evidence relating to 37 and 41 Hall Barn Drive. Whilst these properties were advertised at reduced rents, the reductions formed part of a discretionary marketing initiative intended to stimulate interest in those

particular properties and should not be taken as establishing the market rent for all properties on the development. In any event, those advertisements would indicate a figure closer to £1,200.00 pcm than the £1,000.00 pcm proposed by the Tenant. One of these properties is currently progressing through the application process with a prospective tenant.

18. Dewhurst Homes Ltd acts as the letting agent for the Hall Barn Drive development and has detailed knowledge of the local rental market. Whilst a number of the larger properties on the development achieve rents in the region of £1,800.00 to £1,500.00 pcm (examples shown below), bungalow accommodation remains attractive to a broad range of tenants due to its single-storey layout and accessibility. The Landlord therefore maintains that the market rent for the Property is £1,350.00 pcm. Similar properties in the local area also support this and are submitted as evidence in the attached comparable report produced by Rightmove.

19. The following comparables were provided:

a) Hall Barn Drive, four-bedroom, semi-detached house, at £1,600.00 pcm;

b) Hall Barn Drive, a four-bedroom, detached house, at £1,800.00 pcm;

c) Lower Lane, Longridge, a two-bedroom Lodge, at £1,450.00 pcm;

d) Station Road, Longridge, a two-bedroom, detached bungalow, at £1,395.00 pcm;

e) Hall Barn Drive, a two-bedroom bungalow, at £1,350.00;

f) Hall Barn Drive a two-bedroom bungalow, at £1,350.00. This appears to be plot 33, the Property;

g) Victoria Road, Fulwood, a two-bedroom (double-size) bungalow, with garage, at £1,350.00 pcm;

h) Judd Holmes Lane, Chipping, a two-bedroom (double size) bungalow, at £1,300.00;

i) Warren Fold, Hurst Green, a two-bedroom, semi-detached bungalow, at £1,295.00 pcm;

j) Hoghton Lane, Hoghton, a two-bedroom, semi-detached bungalow, at £1,295.00 pcm;

k) Abbots Croft, Whalley, a two-bedroom, semi-detached bungalow with garage, at £1,250.00 pcm;

l) Abbots Croft, Whalley, a two-bedroom, semi-detached bungalow with garage, at £1,250.00 pcm;

Tenant's Reply

20. The Tenant's MR3 Reply contains a lengthy response to the above. Rather than summarise its contents, a copy of the submissions and further comparables is attached as a PDF document.

Determination and Valuation

21. Under section 14(1) of the 1988 Act (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 date of the Tenant's application (19 July 2026). 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 and Tenant are not taken into account.

22. The Tribunal has considered the rental evidence provided by both parties. The Tribunal places the greatest weight on evidence relating to two-bedroom bungalows in the immediate locality, particularly the neighbouring Hall Barn Drive properties, which are materially similar to the subject property in age, type, accommodation and situation. The Tribunal notes that the neighbouring

bungalows at Nos. 37 and 41 Hall Barn Drive were both marketed at higher figures before being reduced to £1,200.00 pcm following periods of exposure to the market. The Tribunal considers these properties to be the most relevant comparables available. The wider evidence provided by both parties, including the Tenant's comparables in Langho and New Longton and the Landlord's Best Price Guide, has been helpful but is afforded less weight because of differences in location, size, specification and property type. The Tribunal attaches little weight to the four-bedroom houses relied upon by the Landlord, as they are not directly comparable to the subject two-bedroom bungalow.

23. Relying upon its own expert, general knowledge of rental values in the area, together with the evidence of comparable two-bedroom bungalows provided by both parties, the Tribunal considers that the market rent of the Property, assuming it to be let on the terms of the existing tenancy and in its current condition, would be in the order of £1,200.00 pcm. The Tribunal notes that while the Tenant proposes £1,000.00 pcm and the Landlord maintains that £1,350.00 pcm represents the appropriate market rent, neither party has produced compelling evidence of achieved rents at those levels for directly comparable properties. The Tribunal considers that the reduced asking rents of the neighbouring Hall Barn Drive bungalows provide the most persuasive evidence of the level at which the market would be likely to secure a letting for a property of this type.

24. In reaching this determination, the Tribunal has had regard to the following matters:

a) the Property is a modern two-bedroom bungalow situated on a recent development and benefits from a garage, garden and modern construction;

b) the Tenant's evidence that the property is relatively small, extending to approximately 528 sq ft, and was let without curtains, window coverings, a washing machine, wardrobes or decorative light fittings;

c) the evidence relating to Nos. 37 and 41 Hall Barn Drive, being materially similar neighbouring bungalows whose asking rents were reduced to £1,200.00 pcm;

d) the wider rental evidence submitted by both parties, to which lesser weight has been attached because of differences in location, size, specification or property type.

25. The Tribunal considers that these factors are adequately reflected in its assessment of the market rent at £1,200.00 and that no further adjustment is required.

Effect of determination

26. Under Section 14(ZA) of the 1988 Act (as amended) the rent payable under the tenancy following the determination takes effect from the date that the Tribunal directs, which cannot be earlier than the date of the application: 19 July 2026. The Tribunal determines that 25 July 2026, the next rent payment day after that date, is the date from which the new rent shall have effect.

Decision

27. Therefore, the new rent amount is £1,200.00 pcm with effect from 25 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 (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.