



**FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL
PROPERTY CHAMBER
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)**

Case Reference : **CHI/00HB/MNR/2021/0064**

Property : **115A Knole Lane
Bristol
BS10 6QH**

Applicant Tenant : **Mr T Lees & Miss Z Robinson**

Representative : **None**

Respondent Landlord : **Mr I Dykes**

Representative : **None**

Type of Application : **Determination of a Market Rent
sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act
1988**

Tribunal Members : **Mr I R Perry BSc FRICS
Mr M J Ayres FRICS
Mr S J Hodges FRICS**

Date of Inspection : **None. Paper determination**

Date of Decision : **16th August 2021**

DECISION

Summary of Decision

1. On 16th August 2021 the Tribunal determined a market rent of £950 per month to take effect from 1st July 2021.

Background

2. The case concerned the determination of a market rent for the subject property following a referral of the Landlord's notice of increase of rent by the Tenant pursuant to sections 13 and 14 Housing Act 1988.
3. On 1st June 2021 the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £1,000 per month in place of the existing rent of £850 per month to take effect from 1st July 2021. The notice complied with the legal requirements.
4. On 16th June 2021 the Tenant applied to the Tribunal under Section 13(4) (a) of the Housing Act 1988.
5. The Tribunal office issued Directions on 9th July 2021 informing the parties that the Tribunal intended to determine the rent on the basis of an inspection of the property and written representations subject to the parties requesting an oral hearing and that the Tribunal might seek information about the property available on the internet.
6. Neither party applied for a hearing. The parties submitted written representations, copies of which were sent to each other.
7. A Tribunal met via Computer Video Platform on 16th August 2021 to consider the papers and application submitted by the parties.

The Property and Submissions

8. From the information available the property is described as a bungalow which includes a Living Room, Kitchen, Bathroom, Bedroom and Mezzanine. The walls are rendered all beneath a tiled roof.
9. The property is situated on the corner of St Joseph's Road and Knole Lane on the northern side of Bristol about four miles from the centre of the City. All main amenities are within reasonable distance.
10. In their application, which included a number of photographs, the Tenant referred to a number of issues that they had dealt with during their occupation including Wasp's nests, poor standard of carpentry to decking and mezzanine stairs, some rat infestation, a leak around a velux window and intermittent problems with the boiler and hot water.
11. The Landlord also submitted a number of photographs taken before the tenancy began.

12. In his submission the Landlord included details of other one-bedroom properties for rent with asking rentals of £1,000 and £850.

The Law

S14 Determination of Rent by First-tier Tribunal

- (1) Where, under subsection (4) (a) of section 13 above, a tenant refers to a First-tier Tribunal a notice under subsection (2) of that section, the Tribunal shall determine the rent at which, subject to subsections (2) and (4) below, the Tribunal consider that the dwelling-house concerned might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing landlord under an assured tenancy-
- (a) which is a periodic tenancy having the same periods as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates;
 - (b) which begins at the beginning of the new period specified in the notice;
 - (c) the terms of which (other than relating to the amount of the rent) are the same as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates; and
 - (d) in respect of which the same notices, if any, have been given under any of Grounds 1 to 5 of Schedule 2 to this Act, as have been given (or have effect as if given) in relation to the tenancy to which the notice relates.
- (2) In making a determination under this section, there shall be disregarded-
- (a) any effect on the rent attributable to the granting of a tenancy to a sitting tenant;
 - (b) any increase in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a relevant improvement carried out by a person who at the time it was carried out was the tenant, if the improvement;-
 - (i) was carried out otherwise than in pursuance of an obligation to his immediate landlord, or
 - (ii) was carried out pursuant to an obligation to his immediate landlord being an obligation which did not relate to the specific improvement concerned but arose by reference to consent given to the carrying out of that improvement; and
 - (c) any reduction in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a failure by the tenant to comply with any terms of the tenancy.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(b) above, in relation to a notice which is referred by a tenant as mentioned in subsection (1) above, an improvement is a relevant improvement if either it was carried out during the tenancy to which the notice relates, or the following conditions are satisfied, namely-

- (a) that it was carried out not more than twenty-one years before the date of service of the notice; and
 - (b) that, at all times during the period beginning when the improvement was carried out and ending on the date of service of the notice, the dwelling-house has been let under an assured tenancy; and
 - (c) that, on the coming to an end of an assured tenancy at any time during that period, the tenant (or, in the case of joint tenants, at least one of them) did not quit.
- (4) In this section "rent" does not include any service charge, within the meaning of section 18 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, but, subject to that, includes any sums payable by the tenant to the landlord on account of the use of furniture, in respect of council tax or for any of the matters referred to in subsection (1) (a) of that section, whether or not those sums are separate from the sums payable for the occupation.

Consideration and Valuation

- 13. The Tribunal first considered whether it felt able to reasonably and fairly decide this case based on the papers submitted only with no oral hearing. Having read and considered the papers it decided that it could do so.
- 14. The Tribunal is required to determine the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing Landlord under an assured tenancy. The personal circumstances of the Tenant nor Landlord are not relevant to this issue.
- 15. Having carefully considered the representations from the parties and associated correspondence and using its own judgement and knowledge of rental values on the northern side of Bristol the Tribunal decided that the market rent for the subject property if let today in a condition that was usual for such an open market letting would be £1,000 per month.
- 16. From the evidence provided it is apparent that the property is not in such good repair as would be expected to command such a rent. The Tribunal decided that a reduction of £50 per month should be made to reflect its present condition.
- 17. The Tenant made no representation that the starting date for the new rent specified in the Landlord's notice would cause the Tenant undue hardship.

Determination

- 18. The Tribunal therefore decided that the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing Landlord under the terms of this assured tenancy was £950 per month.

19. The Tribunal directed that the new rent of £950 per month should take effect from 1st July 2021 this being the date specified in the original Notice.

RIGHTS OF APPEAL

1. A person wishing to appeal this decision to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) must seek permission to do so by making written application by email to rpsouthern@justice.gov.uk to the First-tier Tribunal at the Regional office which has been dealing with the case.
2. The application must arrive at the Tribunal within 28 days after the Tribunal sends to the person making the application written reasons for the decision.
3. If the person wishing to appeal does not comply with the 28 day time limit, the person shall include with the application for permission to appeal a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28 day time limit; the Tribunal will then decide whether to extend time or not to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed.
4. The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the Tribunal to which it relates, state the grounds of appeal, and state the result the party making the application is seeking.