

**Rent Assessment Committee: Summary reasons for decision.  
Housing Act 1988****Address of Premises**

2 Pikes Hill  
Epsom  
Surrey KT17 4EA

**The Committee members were**

Mr R T A Wilson LL.B  
Mr J H S Preston JP FRICS  
Miss J Dalal

**Background**

1. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 2003 the tenant of the above property referred to the Committee a notice of increase of rent served by the landlord under section 13 of the Housing Act 1988. The landlord's notice, which proposed a rent of £1,000 per month with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003, is dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 2003. The tenancy is a statutory periodic tenancy by succession, which arose on the death of the former tenant. The rent currently payable is £405 per month.

**Inspection**

2. The Committee inspected the property on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2003 and found it to be an end of terrace Victorian property. The accommodation comprised of two reception rooms, kitchen and bathroom/wc to the ground floor, and three bedrooms to the first floor. The exterior of the property needed a complete overhaul to include decoration and repair. The windows were showing signs of neglect. The guttering was rusty and the roof slates looked old and at the end of their effective life. The interior of the property

was similarly neglected partly due to the tenants' neglect. The kitchen and bathroom were both very old and completely un-modernised. The plumbing and wiring looked in need of modernisation. The property had no central heating. The garden fencing on three sides had failed provided no privacy and posed a security risk. The street was not exclusively residential and somewhat run down. There was a pub close by and a busy car park to the rear. There was no off street parking.

## **Evidence**

3. The committee received written representations from the landlord and tenant and these were copied to the parties.
4. A hearing was held at Epsom Town Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2003 at which oral representations were made by the tenant. The landlord was not present or represented.
5. In the Landlord's written representations, their agents put forward 16 Providence Place, Epsom, Surrey as a comparable property. They described this as an end of terrace two-bedroom property refurbished to a basic standard with central heating. It had been let on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2003 for £1,075 on an assured shorthold tenancy, however, no letting particulars were produced, nor a copy of the tenancy agreement or a floor plan. The Committee inspected the exterior of this property and found it to be in good external condition with off street parking for at least two cars. Unlike the subject property, the street was quiet with well-presented housing stock and exclusively residential.

6. In written representations, the tenant outlined the interior work carried out by the previous tenants. He also pointed to the original nature of the windows and the fact that nothing had been done to the outside of the property for at least 40 years

### **The Law and Consideration**

7. In accordance with the terms of section 14 Housing Act 1988 the Committee proceeded to determine the rent at which it considered that the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let on the open market by a willing landlord to a willing tenant under an assured tenancy.
8. We first considered the evidence of 16 Providence Place, Epsom put forward by the landlord's agent as a comparable. Because of the differences between this property and the subject property as detailed in paragraph 5 above, and having regard to the Committee's own knowledge of the operation of the local market, the Committee decided that 16 Providence Place did not support an open market rent of £1000 per month for the subject property.
9. With the benefit of our knowledge of open markets both generally and in the area, we concluded that the rent for the subject property, let on an assured shorthold tenancy, in the open market, in good modern letting condition would be £900 per month. By good modern letting condition we mean what a prospective tenant would expect to find in this locality in a property available to let on the open market. The property would be well presented, with modern fittings, clean and comfortable. The property would be in

good structural and decorative order both inside and out. It would have central heating and a modern kitchen and bathroom. It would also have white goods such as a cooker, fridge and washing machine.

10. The adjustments below take account of the difference between such a property and the one we are considering and allow for the effect that we believe those differences would have on the rent that the subject property would fetch on the open market.

Open Market Rent £900 per month

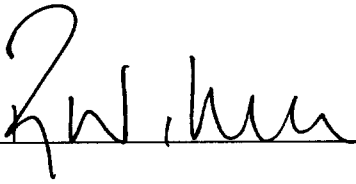
**Less allowances for: -**

Lack of central heating	£ 90	
Lack of carpets and white goods	£ 50	
Tenants repairing liability	£ 35	
Lack of modern bathroom	£ 50	
Lack of modern kitchen	£ 50	
Lack of off street parking and to		
Acknowledge the nature of the location	£ 20	
General disrepair	£ 55	
		<u>£350</u>
		<u>£550</u> per month

**Decision**

11. The Committee therefore concluded that the rent at which the property might reasonably be expected to be let on the open market would be £550 per month.
12. There being no evidence submitted to the Committee of undue financial hardship to the tenant this rent will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2003 being the date specified by the landlord in the notice of increase.

Chairman



Dated

26<sup>th</sup> August 2003

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This document contains a summary of the reasons for the Rent Assessment Committee's decision. If either party requires extended reasons to be given, they will be provided following a request to the committee clerk, which must be made within 21 days from the date of issue of this document.