

SAMPLE PAGES FOR PRIVATE RENTERS IN ENGLAND

Rent Challenge Pack: free preview

Sample pages to go with the Rent Challenge Pack, a self-help pack for private renters in England who decide to challenge a rent increase at the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber).

This preview is free. The full pack is £34.99.

Who it is for

Private renters in England who have a Form 4A notice from their landlord proposing a new rent and who decide to challenge it at the tribunal. You apply yourself, online or on the paper MR1 form. If you are not sure yet whether to challenge, start with the free checker and guides at www.rentersexpert.co.uk.

What the full pack gives you

- **Your MR1 answers in the form's own order.** You answer questions about your notice, your home and similar rents, and get every MR1 question with an answer made from your own facts, ready to check and copy.
- **Your rent evidence table** for question 12.2 and, if you need one, your hardship statement for question 15.1.
- **Covering letters you send yourself:** the email or letter to the tribunal and the note for your landlord's copy.
- **Your guide:** your dates, your notice check with the law cited, what to attach and what happens next.
- **On screen, as two PDFs and by email.** You check, sign and send your own application.

In this preview

1	Cover and contents	This page.
2	MR1 workbook: question 12	Prompts, writing space and a made-up example answer.
3	Evidence planner	Photos and sizes, features and a comparables worksheet.
4	Timeline worksheet	Your notice dates, your deadline and the steps after you apply.
5	Hardship notes	Income, outgoings and evidence, with a made-up example.
6	Guidance only, not legal advice	Free advice, sources and the full pack.

How to use this preview

- 1 Print the pages, or read them on screen and keep your notes on paper.
- 2 Read each made-up example, then write your own facts in your own words. Do not copy the examples.
- 3 Use your notes when you fill in your own MR1, online or on paper. You sign it, pay the fee or ask for help with fees and send it yourself.
- 4 Do not wait for perfect evidence. GOV.UK says you must apply before the start date of the new rent, even if you are still collecting your supporting evidence.

Three things to know before you start

- **The deadline.** The tribunal must receive your application before the start date your landlord has given in question 4.6 of the Form 4A.
- **No higher rent.** The tribunal cannot set a new rent higher than the rent your landlord proposed (Housing Act 1988, section 14ZB(5)).
- **Keep paying your current rent.** Form 4A says you do not have to pay the new rent amount until the tribunal has made its decision.

SAMPLE FROM THE MR1 WORKBOOK

Question 12: open market rent

This sample follows the paper MR1 form (version 08.26) and uses its question numbers and wording.

What the form asks

12.1 "What do you think the open market rent should be?"

12.2 "Do you have any evidence in support of your proposed open market rent?"

- ☐ "Yes, I have set out my supporting evidence in the box below."
- ☐ "Yes. I have attached supporting evidence."
- ☐ "No"

12.3 "Is there any other information you would like the tribunal to take into account in determining the rent?"

Answers: "No" or "Yes. Give details below."

The tribunal decides one figure: the open market rent for your home. In plain words, that is the rent your home might reasonably be expected to let for on the open market, on the same terms as your tenancy (Housing Act 1988, section 14(1)). The tribunal ignores any rise in value from improvements you made that you were not obliged to make, and any drop in value caused by you not keeping to your tenancy (section 14(2)). It cannot set a new rent higher than your landlord proposed (section 14ZB(5)). What you can afford is not part of this test. Hardship is a separate question: see page 5.

Think it through

- ☐ Which homes near you are most like yours (type, bedrooms, area)? Record them on the worksheet on page 3.
- ☐ Which are agreed rents and which are asking rents? GOV.UK says evidence from actual agreed lettings is stronger.
- ☐ Is your home better or worse than each one? Think about size, condition, heating, glazing, the kitchen and bathroom, parking and outside space.
- ☐ Is there disrepair your landlord knows about? Note the dates you reported it. This can go in question 12.3.
- ☐ Can you give one figure a month and explain in two or three sentences how you got there?

Your draft answer to question 12.1

Your notes for question 12.3

Made-up example. Sam and his flat are invented. Do not copy this answer: use your own facts, in your own words.

12.1 £950 a month. Similar one-bedroom flats near me let for £925 to £1,000 a month (see 12.2). My neighbour in flat 4 agreed £975 a month in June 2026 and said I could use this. Her flat has a new kitchen and a parking space. My kitchen is about 15 years old and I have no parking. I think £950 a month is the open market rent for my flat. The proposed rent of £1,100 a month is higher than every example I found.

12.2 Ticked "Yes, I have set out my supporting evidence in the box below." A short table of three homes, each marked as asking or agreed, with copies of the two adverts attached.

12.3 Yes. The bathroom window does not close properly. I reported it to the letting agent by email on 4 July 2026 and 2 September 2026 (copies attached). It has not been repaired.

Why this works. It gives one figure, shows how it comes from the evidence, admits where the neighbour's flat is better and gives dates for the disrepair.

SAMPLE FROM THE EVIDENCE PLANNER

Photos, measurements, features and comparables

Photos are shared with your landlord. The MR1 asks for a photo of the outside of your home (question 6.6) and one photo of each room with its approximate size (question 6.7). The form says the photos will be shared with your landlord, their representative or letting agent (if any) and the tribunal. Make sure nothing personal is visible: no people, post, documents, family photos or screens.

Room by room

Room	Photo taken	Nothing personal showing	Approximate size (for example 3.5 m x 4 m)	Condition, damp or repairs needed
Outside (front)	☐	☐		
Living room	☐	☐		
Kitchen	☐	☐		
Bathroom	☐	☐		
Bedroom 1	☐	☐		
Bedroom 2	☐	☐		
Other room	☐	☐		

Features and who provided them

GOV.UK asks for features such as central heating, double glazing, carpets, curtains, appliances and furnishings, with details of who provided them. Use this table for MR1 questions 7.1 (furniture and appliances under the tenancy) and 9.1 (indoor features such as heating, glazing and flooring).

Feature	Landlord provided	I provided	Not there	Type, age and condition
Heating: gas, electric or other	☐	☐	☐	
Double or single glazing	☐	☐	☐	
Carpets and flooring	☐	☐	☐	
Curtains or blinds	☐	☐	☐	
Cooker and hob	☐	☐	☐	
Fridge and freezer	☐	☐	☐	
Washing machine	☐	☐	☐	
Furniture	☐	☐	☐	

Comparables worksheet

Street or area	Type and bedrooms	Condition and features	Rent per month	Asking or agreed	Date and source

GOV.UK says evidence from agreed lettings is stronger than information from letting agents or websites. It also says market rental agreements are usually stronger evidence than previous fair rent decisions or local housing allowance rates. Past rent decisions are on the GOV.UK residential property tribunal decisions register: look for market rent decisions. Save a dated copy of each advert. Ask before you share a neighbour's rent.

SAMPLE TIMELINE WORKSHEET

Your dates, step by step

Fill in your own dates from your own notice. The free checker at www.rentersexpert.co.uk can help you check the dates in it.

Before you apply

1 The date the notice arrived Write down how it came too: by hand, by post or by email.	Date the notice arrived _____
2 The start date of the new rent Question 4.6 on your Form 4A.	Start date (question 4.6) _____
3 The last day for the tribunal to receive your application The last weekday (Monday to Friday) before the start date. Form 4A says the tribunal must receive the application before the start date your landlord has given in question 4.6. Citizens Advice says an application that arrives on a Saturday or Sunday does not count, so allow for weekends and bank holidays. Do not leave it to the last day.	Last day (the last weekday before the start date) _____
4 The date you applied Online, by email or by post. Pay the £47 fee or apply for help with fees. If you apply by email or post, the MR1 says you must send a copy of the application and any attachments to your landlord. If you apply online, GOV.UK says the tribunal sends it. Keep proof of what you sent and when.	Date I applied _____ Date I sent my landlord a copy (email or post only) _____

Made-up example. The dates are invented: work out your own from your own notice.

The start date in question 4.6 is 1 December 2026. The tribunal must receive the application before that date, so the last day is Monday 30 November 2026. If the start date were a Monday, the last day would be the Friday before. Applying in October leaves time to deal with any problems.

After you apply

5 Your landlord's response on form MR2 The MR1 says the landlord will have 28 days to send you and the tribunal their response on a form called MR2.	Date the MR2 arrived (if they respond) _____
6 Your reply on form MR3 If you receive a response from your landlord, you have 14 days to respond using form MR3. If you reply, copy your reply to your landlord.	Last day for my MR3 reply _____
7 Keep paying your current rent Form 4A says you do not have to pay the new rent amount until the tribunal has made its decision.	☐ I keep paying my current rent in full.
8 The tribunal's decision Any new rent is not backdated. It starts on the start date in the notice if the decision comes first. Otherwise it starts from the first rent period on or after the decision, unless the tribunal directs a later date because of hardship (page 5). Housing Act 1988, section 14ZB(3).	Date of the decision _____ Date any new rent starts _____

Other dates to keep

GOV.UK says the decision is often made just on the documents. If the tribunal needs an inspection or a hearing, it will tell you.

Inspection or hearing date (only if the tribunal sets one)

Anything else the tribunal asks for and the date it is due

SAMPLE HARDSHIP NOTES

If a new rent would cause you hardship

The rule. For a Form 4A challenge, if paying any new rent from the usual date would cause you undue hardship, the tribunal can set a later start date, up to two months after its decision (Housing Act 1988, section 14ZB(3)(c) and (4)). The tribunal decides whether to do this. Hardship can change when a new rent starts, not the open market rent figure.

MR1 question 15.1: "Are you suggesting that a rent increase will cause you hardship?" Answers: "No" or "Yes. Give details and attach any evidence you wish to rely upon."

Income and outgoings

Money coming in	Each month
Wages after tax	£
Benefits	£
Pension	£
Other income	£
Total	£

The difference	Each month
Money in minus money out	£
Extra each month at the proposed rent	£

Money going out	Each month
Rent now	£
Council tax	£
Energy and water	£
Food	£
Travel	£
Childcare	£
Debt repayments	£
Phone, internet and other	£
Total	£

Your circumstances

Who lives with you and depends on you (children or adults you care for)

Debts and arrears: what you owe, to whom and what you repay each month

Why paying any new rent from the usual date would cause you hardship

Evidence to attach

- ☐ Payslips or benefit award letters
- ☐ Recent bank statements
- ☐ Household bills
- ☐ Letters about debts or arrears
- ☐ Anything else about your circumstances, such as a letter from a doctor or school

Your landlord sees what you attach. A copy of your application and evidence goes to your landlord. You may want to cover up account numbers and sort codes.

Made-up example. Jo and her figures are invented. Do not copy this answer: use your own facts, in your own words.

15.1 Yes. I work part time and take home about £1,240 a month. My rent is £795 a month and my other essential costs are about £520 a month, including £35 a month for an energy debt. I am already about £75 short each month (budget and bank statements attached). My son is 7 and lives with me. Paying £950 a month from the notice start date would leave me unable to pay for food and heating. I ask the tribunal to direct the latest start date it can, so I have time to adjust.

Why this works. It gives real figures, says what evidence is attached and asks for one clear thing: a later start date. It does not argue about the open market rent, which is a separate question.

Guidance only, not legal advice

This preview is general guidance for private renters in England. It is not legal advice about your case. RentersExpert is not a law firm. We are not solicitors and we do not check individual cases.

England only

These rules apply in England. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have different rules.

You act for yourself

You fill in, sign and send your own application, online or on the paper MR1. You pay the fee or ask for help with fees yourself. We never act for you. We do not fill in, check or send anything for you and we do not contact the tribunal or your landlord on your behalf.

Free advice

- **Shelter:** england.shelter.org.uk
- **Citizens Advice:** citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Law centres:** lawcentres.org.uk
- The tribunal can answer questions about the process on 0300 303 5857. The MR1 says it cannot give legal advice on your case.
- If you are worried about losing your home, contact your local council.

Coming change

The government has said HMRC's Valuation Office will become responsible for decisions on challenges to rent increases in England. No start date has been announced. Until then, renters who want to challenge a rent increase must still apply to the First-tier Tribunal.

The full Rent Challenge Pack

Your MR1 answers in the form's order, your covering letters and your dates, made from your own facts. £34.99, one payment.

See the pack at www.rentersexpert.co.uk/rent-challenge-pack.html

Spotted a mistake?

Tell us at www.rentersexpert.co.uk/contact.html. Please do not include details of your case: we cannot give advice about your own case.

Sources

Housing Act 1988, section 13: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/50/section/13>
Housing Act 1988, section 14: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/50/section/14>
Housing Act 1988, section 14ZB: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/50/section/14ZB>
SI 2026/354 (Form 4A is the prescribed form): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/354/made>
SI 2026/421 (the new rules apply from 1 May 2026): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/421/regulation/2>
Form 4A, version 05.26: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/assured-tenancy-forms>
MR1 Apply for a determination of an open market rent (08.26): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a75ddfe0a700895e2d79f9c/MR1_0826_save.pdf
GOV.UK, Apply for an open market rent determination: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-open-market-rent-determination>
First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) Fees Order 2013, Schedule 1: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1179/schedule/1>
Help with fees: <https://www.gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees>
Residential property tribunal decisions: <https://www.gov.uk/residential-property-tribunal-decisions>
GOV.UK news, 9 September 2026: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stronger-protections-and-greater-confidence-for-renters>
Checked against legislation.gov.uk and GOV.UK on 6 October 2026. Rules, forms and fees change: check GOV.UK before you act. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.