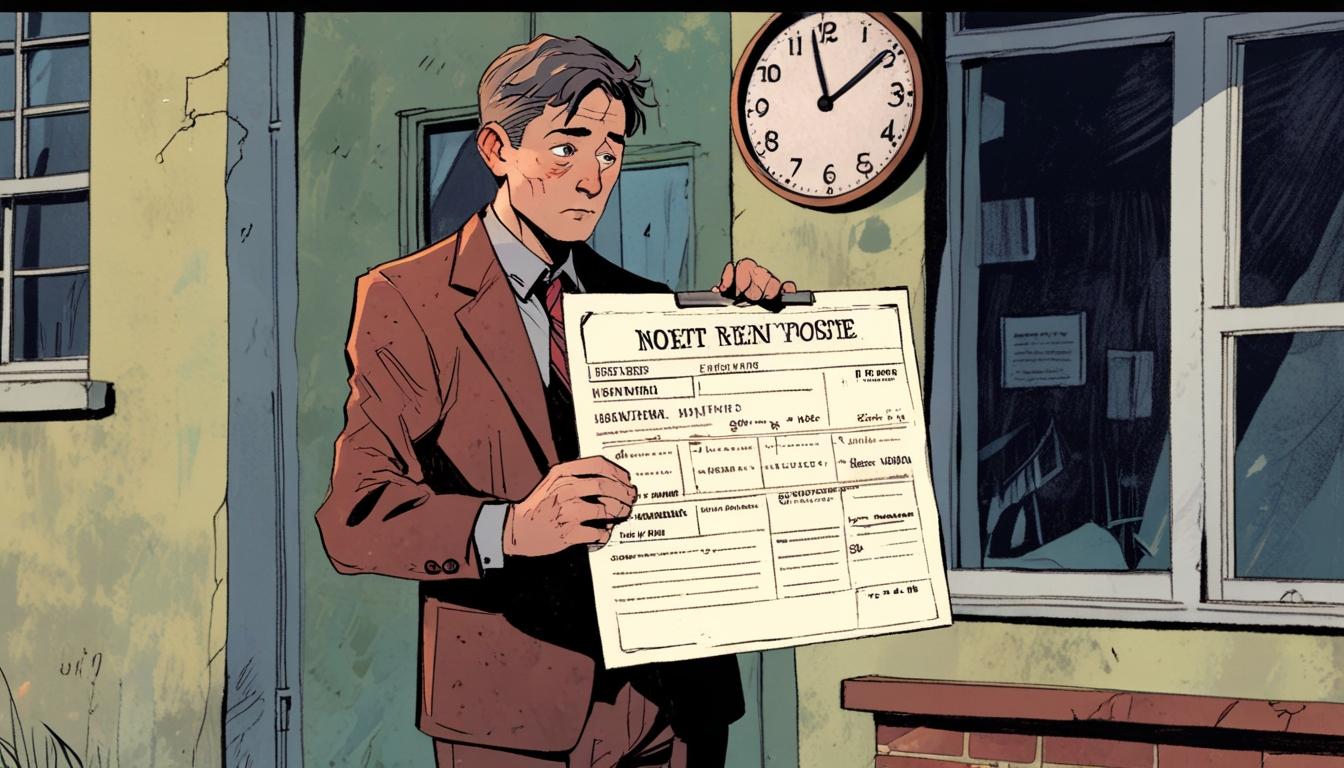
# Bradford landlords face nearly $1 million in unpaid rent amid calls for Ontario landlord-tenant board reform



Landlords in Bradford face nearly $1 million in unpaid rent over four years, prompting calls for reform of Ontario’s Landlord and Tenant Board system

Bradford landlords have struggled with almost $1 million in unpaid rent over the past four years, highlighting ongoing challenges in resolving landlord-tenant disputes through Ontario’s Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB). Representatives from Small Ownership Landlords Ontario (SOLO) brought these concerns before Bradford council on April 15, emphasising the urgent need to update the system to address mounting backlogs and procedural delays.

Kevin Costain and Rose Marie, chair and vice-chair of SOLO respectively, presented their deputation at the invitation of Ward 4 Councillor Joseph Giordano. Drawing from publicly available data on openroom.ca, which tracks LTB filings and orders, Costain described the unpaid rent issue as “theft” and a “serious and local problem” that is significantly impacting “mom-and-pop” landlords. He remarked to council that professional tenants—those who exploit legal loopholes and delays—often avoid paying rent or eviction for extended periods, leaving small-scale landlords financially strained.

As of June 26, 2024, the Ontario ombudsman reported the LTB was handling a backlog of approximately 36,000 cases waiting more than 90 days for scheduling, with average wait times from application to hearing ranging between four and eight months. Costain highlighted one tenant application stalled for about six years, saying, “Imagine waiting six years for anything, for a hearing. None of this should be tolerated in a reasonably healthy rental market.”

SOLO was established as a non-profit lobbying group in spring 2020 in response to these escalating issues, exacerbated by provincial changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation now represents more than 8,000 independent landlords across Ontario and provides educational resources, informal property inspections, and emotional support to its members. “That’s priceless,” Deputy Mayor Raj Sandhu remarked during the council meeting, recognising the value of the support SOLO offers landlords coping with frustration and financial loss.

Specific local examples were discussed, including the experience of Bradford landlords Michelle Taddeo and Tony Natale. They endured over two years trying to evict a tenant who failed to pay rent and caused extensive damage to their basement apartment, resulting in tens of thousands of dollars in losses. Ward 6 Councillor Nickolas Harper shared a story about helping a resident whose tenant had left a tap running continuously, causing property damage, while Ward 5 Councillor Peter Ferragine recounted his ongoing efforts to evict a tenant refusing to vacate a rental property that has since been sold. As a real estate agent, Ferragine noted the decline in interest in rental property investments owing largely to tribunal-related difficulties: “Nobody wants to do it anymore. It’s a scary thing to do.”

Kevin Costain also told his personal tale of a tenant who “fraudulently” applied for his property, subsequently assaulted him, and ultimately destroyed the home by setting it on fire. The eviction process took 16 months and concluded eight months after his house had been razed, an experience Costain documented in his book From Rent to Ruin. “When I needed basic and timely justice, there was none,” he said.

SOLO acknowledged Bradford council’s recent motion urging the province to better protect renters and small landlords, with Costain summarising their key recommendations to address LTB inefficiencies. These include expediting non-payment eviction cases to reduce backlogs, establishing separate tribunal tracks for small and large landlords, and permitting straightforward changes to applications after filing so they are not dismissed over minor errors. “Everyone deserves access to justice when disputes arise,” Costain stated, emphasising fairness for both tenants and landlords.

Beyond advocacy efforts, SOLO offers free assistance to landlords including guidance on when a tenant might face charges under the Provincial Offences Act, although these decisions depend on individual circumstances. Marie noted, “We’ve been doing this for five years. Every day we learn something new.”

Councillor Giordano, reflecting on the volume of responses to his motion, said he was “shocked” by the number of people affected not only locally but throughout Ontario. He encouraged those encountering similar difficulties with the LTB to reach out to their Members of Provincial Parliament and contribute to ongoing calls for reform.

The challenges faced by Bradford’s small-scale landlords mirror wider provincial concerns about the efficiency and fairness of the Landlord and Tenant Board system. SOLO’s presentation to Bradford council illustrates the complex financial and emotional toll unpaid rent and eviction delays impose on property owners, as well as the urgent demand for legislative and procedural changes to support a more balanced rental housing market.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.ontario.ca/page/landlord-and-tenant-board> - This official Ontario government page details the role and function of the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB), supporting the article's discussion about LTB as the provincial tribunal handling landlord-tenant disputes in Ontario.
* <https://ontariolandlord.ca/landlord-tenant-issues/ltb-backlogs/> - This Ontario landlord advocacy website reports on the extensive backlog and delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board, corroborating claims of 36,000 cases waiting more than 90 days and hearing delays of four to eight months.
* <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/i-give-up-ontario-landlord-says-he-is-owed-25000-in-back-rent-1.5523458> - This news article highlights landlords in Ontario facing large sums of unpaid rent, supporting the article’s reference to financial losses and unpaid rent issues experienced by small landlords like those in Bradford.
* <https://www.smallownerslandlordsontario.ca/about-us/> - The Small Ownership Landlords Ontario (SOLO) website outlines the organization's founding in 2020, mission to support small landlords, and its advocacy efforts, confirming the article’s statements about SOLO’s role and membership.
* <https://www.ombudsman.on.ca/resources/reports/landlord-and-tenant-board-report-2024> - This Ontario Ombudsman report discusses systemic challenges and delays at the LTB, including case backlogs and extended wait times, validating the article's statistics about LTB delays as of mid-2024.