

*Community Counts* is designed to provide evidence to improve the health and well-being of Nova Scotians and to contribute to making our communities sustainable.



The Coastal Communities Network (CCN) is a volunteer association of organizations which promotes the survival and development of Nova Scotia's coastal and rural communities.

The Pictou Regional Development Commission (PRDC) addresses both the community and economic needs of Pictou County.



Each of these groups have experienced what *Community Counts* can do for their organization. In recent months, they have been working together to promote the use of *Community Counts* for community development. They see *Community Counts* as a dynamic tool that can help build healthy, strong, and vital communities.

Both CCN and PRDC are able to combine local knowledge with the facts they find on *Community Counts*, allowing them to envision new opportunities for building economically and socially sustainable communities.

These groups have also been busy creating a facilitator's guide for leading sessions on using *Community Counts* as a tool for community development. This guide has been tested within a few community groups. During the first hour long introduction to *Community Counts*, people were asked to describe their community — how many people live there, what sort of age ranges make up the population, how many residents have completed high school, or who have post-secondary education? After comparing their observations with the facts on *Community Counts*, it was apparent that the residents were aware of many aspects of their community, but were also un-



aware of some. They knew the population and age ranges quite accurately, however when it came to learning the number of residents that had not completed high school — they were shocked. This could have major implications on their community development initiatives.



These sorts of facts must be considered when a community produces promotional material such as newsletters. They must ensure that their newsletter is written for all members of their community to understand and enjoy. *Community Counts* could also be very important in providing information when thinking about future projects and funding proposals.

CCN, PRDC, and Community Counts staff encourage other community groups, Regional Development Authorities and local businesses alike to use the information found on *Community Counts*. It is very difficult to plan for the future without a clear picture of where a community is today and the trends that got it there.

A survey is currently being developed which will be posted on the Community Counts website. We want to know what you and your organization think of *Community Counts*.

Soon to be available on our website is a step by step guide that can be used by community group leaders to introduce their organizations to *Community Counts*. This guide will also include a workbook with hands on exercises to help your group explore and learn to use *Community Counts*.



For more information on CCN and PRDC, please visit their websites.

<http://www.coastalcommunities.ns.ca/main.php>  
<http://www.wearepictoucounty.com/>



## Community Counts: Ready When You Are

### Profile on Caledonia, Queens County

Caledonia is a small rural community in the heart of northern Queens County, and has a lot going for it. Just ask Mary Keirstead, who works as part-time Office Manager at a local lumber mill and is involved in just about every other aspect of life in Caledonia. “With the North Queens Community Health Centre here, we believe we have about the best health care you can get in Nova Scotia,” she says. “Not long ago, a dog bit me while I was going to the post office. Within five minutes, I was being stitched up.”



Mary goes on to identify many other community assets based in Caledonia that also serve the wider area of North Queens. “First of all, we have green space, peace and quiet, natural surroundings, and clean air. Then, we have a hardware store, a supermarket, a liquor store, a pharmacy, a credit union, a nursing home, and a wonderful range of volunteers in our community,” she says, pausing briefly for breath. “Kejimikujik National Park is just down the road, and we have a volunteer fire department, the Queens County Exhibition Grounds, and high-speed internet connectivity.

“It (*Community Counts*) can help us build on all the positives we have here.”

We have a lot of infrastructure for such a small place, and we need every bit of it.” Despite all the community has going for it, the fall of 2006 wasn’t a great time for Caledonia. In mid-September, North Queens Elementary School burned to the ground. Then, just a few days later, the local gas station announced it was closing. “It was a double whammy,” recalls Mary. “We decided we needed to do something positive, so we arranged to have *Community Counts* come to Caledonia to help us paint an accurate picture of North Queens.”

Dennis Pilkey the (now retired) Director of Community Counts came to Caledonia in the fall of 2006 to give a presentation on how *Community Counts* can help with local community development. Although the community hasn’t yet applied everything *Community Counts* has to offer, Mary sees the great potential to help with local community development. “First, we can learn from how other communities have benefited from Community Counts,” she says. “Then, it can help us build on all the positives we have here. Already, it’s told us that a surprising number of older people are leaving our community. We think they move to be nearer to the hospital and the wider range of social activities in Bridgewater or Halifax. I know there’s a lot more that Community Counts can do for Caledonia, and for North Queens.”



Aquatic Centre

Cindy Lewis runs Aunt Nettie’s Bed and Breakfast in Caledonia, and she attended the *Community Counts* presentation. “We wanted to get things

moving in North Queens,” she tells me. “And, *Community Counts* was very timely. We had heard about all the good things *Community Counts* had done to help people in Upper Stewiacke accomplish. The presentation lifted our community spirit here. It was very inspiring and it gave people a great deal of hope and confidence in the future of our community. Once we get the ball rolling, there will be no stopping our community from making great improvements”

Mary and Cindy are both involved with the North Queens Board of Trade, an important local engine of community development. “The Board’s biggest challenge right now is to develop new leadership,” she says. “Then we can begin to tackle the challenges we face in North Queens. And, once we get a jump start, we’ll be able to make full use of *Community Counts* to bring about community improvements.”

Community Counts will be ready when you are, Mary.

## North Queens Community Facts (2001)

### Population in 2001

1,564

### Population Under Age 20

North Queens: 22.8 %    Nova Scotia: 25.0 %

### Population Aged 65 and Over

North Queens: 18.9 %    Nova Scotia: 13.9 %

### Median Individual Income

North Queens: \$15,487    Nova Scotia: \$18,735

### Residents Who Own Their Own Home

North Queens: 93.2 %    Nova Scotia: 70.8 %

### Residents Aged 20+ Holding a Post-Secondary Certificate

North Queens: 38.0 %    Nova Scotia: 49.2 %

### Increase In Value of Dwellings (1991 to 2001)

North Queens: 40.8 %    Nova Scotia: 27.8 %



*Community Counts* identifies North Queens to include Caledonia and the surrounding communities of:

- Harmony Mills
- Hibernia
- Kempt
- Lakeview
- Low Landing
- Meagher
- Mount Merrit
- New Grafton
- North Brookfield
- Northfield
- Pleasant River
- South Brookfield
- West Caledonia
- Westfield
- Whiteburn Mines

## Tools and Tips



### Community Profiles: How to find a quick snapshot of your community

In a hurry for some facts or graphs to take to a meeting?

Looking for an overview of the data available for your community, but don't have the time to filter through all of the data on Community Counts?

Visit the [Community Profiles](#) section of our website, under **Data Summaries** in the main menu (on the left-hand side of our website). You can view and/or print a discussion of the trends in the data for your community, and how they compare to Nova Scotia as a whole.

To find your area of interest, click on '[choose](#)' under the appropriate geographic tab. For example, if you are looking for a profile on the Capital Health District Health Authority — click "[choose](#)" under the DHA tab and find it in the list of DHA's. To find profiles for other geographic views (Municipal, Electoral, or Justice), click on '[Select a New View](#)' (See the blue buttons on the upper right corner of the screen).

There are profiles for five of our subject areas: Demographics, Income, Education, Households, and Labour. To view the profile for a different subject area, simply click on each tab.

You can either print the profile for the selected subject area or you can print profiles for all subjects by clicking just one button! These buttons are located on the upper right corner of the screen.

**Community Counts:**  
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Data Summaries  
[Community Profiles](#)



**Print Selected Subject**

**Print All Subjects  
Select a New View**

Community Profiles can become a great document full of easy to read facts and some images to help visualize the data.

### Questions? Contact us at:

**Nova Scotia Community Counts**  
*Your Community Information Resource*



<http://www.gov.ns.ca/fina/communitycounts>

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