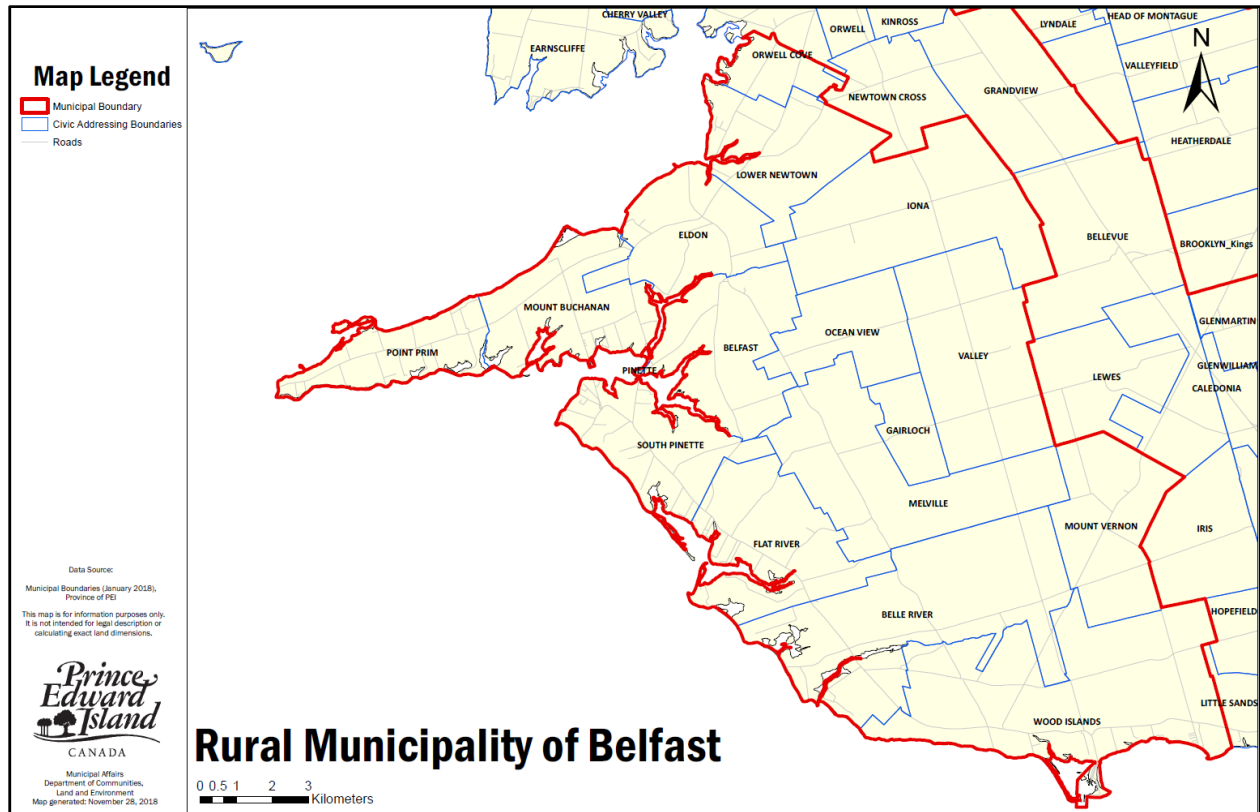


# Rural Municipality of Belfast Profile

**Belfast** is a municipality that holds community status in Prince Edward Island, Canada. It is located in southeastern Queens County situated on the island's south shore along the Northumberland Strait, Belfast is a rural municipality that is predominantly an agricultural area.

## Map



## History

Belfast was the landing site of Lord Selkirk's settlers in 1803. These displaced Scottish farmers soon established themselves on the best land in the area and it became one of the most productive farming districts in the colony.

These Presbyterian Scots were joined in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century by displaced Irish potato famine refugees who were forced to take poorer land in surrounding areas. Political, social and economic tensions between the Roman Catholic Irish and Presbyterian Scots boiled over during a general election in March 1847, resulting in what has become known as the Belfast Riot.

## ***Belfast Today***

Today, Belfast is known for its Belfast Highland Greens golf course, Mini Woolen Mills, Lord Selkirk Provincial Park and Campground, the Wood Islands Village and Lighthouse, the Belfast Rec Centre, the Point Prim Lighthouse, Wood Islands Park and Trail, the Pinette Raceway, and much more.

The lighthouse at Point Prim, which was designed by Architect Isaac Smith in 1845 (notable for designing Province House – Prince Edward Island), is the oldest lighthouse on the Island. The 18.2 m (60 foot) structure is also the only round brick lighthouse on PEI and one of the last of its kind in Canada.

Of particular note is the local parish church, Saint John's; built in 1824 in the style of Sir Christopher Wren. In addition to Saint John's, Belfast is home to two other churches, namely, Saint Michael's Roman Catholic, and Wood Islands Presbyterian.

## ***Population and Assessment***

Population at last Census (2016):	1670
Assessed Properties at last assessment (February 17, 2021):	
Commercial Assessment	- Current Taxable: \$6,159,400
	- Total Properties: 44
Non-Commercial Assessment	- Current Taxable: \$146,078,300
	- Total Properties: 2441
Voting Population during most recent By-Election (January 19, 2021):	1295 Voters

## ***Amenities***

Belfast's major recreational components include: the Belfast Rec Center with one ice surface, a community room, a canteen and a skate sharpening service, as well as a softball field beside the rink; Belfast Highland Greens, a 9-hole golf course; Belfast Community Pool, which includes two outdoor pools, a kiddy pool and canteen services.

Belfast is also home to a community-operated campground at Lord Selkirk Provincial Park, the community-operated park and trail located at the Wood Islands Village and the location of the Wood Island Visitors Centre, the Pinette Raceway in South Pinette, two PEI Liquor Retail Outlets (Wood Islands and Coopers Red and White), two community General Stores (Coopers Red and White in Eldon and The Store in Belle River), and two Canada Post Outlets (Belfast and Belle River).

Restaurants and Food Service include: Bryson's Family Bakery, the Point Prim Chowder House, the Chuckwagon, the Country Taste Kitchen and Bakery, Wood Islands Whistle Stop, Furious Frank's Food Truck, and K & A's Dairy Snack Bar (all seasonal except for the Bakery).

## ***Rural Municipality of Belfast, PEI Profile – As At: May 2021***

The Rural Municipality of Belfast is also home to the three other seasonal operations, namely: the Belfast Corn Maze, the Pinette Provincial Park, and Penny's U-Pick Strawberries. Summer includes such Festivals as: Belfast Days and the Belfast Highland Games, and more.

South Pinette is where you can find the Belfast Rural Fire Department, and the Wood Islands Village is where you can find the Rural Municipality of Belfast Municipal Office.

### ***Economy***

One of the region's major employers is Northumberland Ferries, which operates a terminal in Wood Islands. This ferry service, which connects Prince Edward Island to Caribou, Nova Scotia, was first established in 1941. Two ferryboats, the M.V. *Confederation* and the M.V. *Holiday Island*, currently service the route.

### ***Education***

Students in the area attend Belfast Consolidated School. From grade 10 through grade 12, they attend Montague Regional High School. Both schools are administered by P.E.I.'s English Language School Board.

### ***Notable People***

Notable "Belfasters" include former P.E.I. premier John Angus MacLean (d. 2000).

Dr. Angus MacAulay, b. 10 Dec. 1759, a lay preacher and medical doctor, was instrumental in helping to establish the first church (a log structure) in 1804. Macaulay was thus easily elected to the House of Assembly in 1806 as a representative of Queens County. When Lieutenant Governor Smith called for elections to a new assembly in 1818, Macaulay was returned from Queens County, and was an active speaker of the house government. Elected again in 1820, Macaulay was once more chosen speaker when the house convened in July. Macaulay stood by his people publicly and privately for more than a quarter of a century. He gave a plot of his own land in Point Prim for a cemetery (where he buried his own daughter). The Polly Cemetery is still used by locals today in the community of Belfast. d. 6 Dec. 1827.

Dougald MacKinnon (December 15, 1886 – August 21, 1970) was a farmer, fisherman and political figure on Prince Edward Island. He represented 4<sup>th</sup> Queens in the Legislative Assembly of Prince Edward Island from 1935 to 1959 as a Liberal. He was known for repeatedly working for his constituent. As a people person he was well regarded in the community of Belfast. He served in the province's Executive Council. His portfolio included Minister of Public Works and Highways, Minister of Industry and Natural Resources and was the first Minister of Fisheries for the Province of PEI. He was also involved in the local Belfast Historical Society and served as President of the St Andrew's Society.

## **Communities within the Rural Municipality of Belfast**

The Rural Municipality of Belfast was incorporated in 1972 and contains the following (17) localities or settlements or communities within its municipal boundaries:

Belfast	Belle River	Eldon
Flat River	Gairloch	Iona
Lower Newtown	Melville	Mount Buchanan
Mount Vernon	Ocean View	Orwell Cove
Pinette	Point Prim	South Pinette
Valley	Wood Islands	

## **Council – Current Council of the Rural Municipality of Belfast**

*(term to end in December 2022)*

Mayor:	Garth Gillis		
Deputy Mayor:	Virginia Cooke		
Councillors:	Lynn Docherty	Billy Gamble	Andy Henry
	Mary Mecher-Carlson	Joanne Vessey	
Administration:	Bob Brooks (Chief Administrative Officer)		



(Back Row l-r: Councillor Billy Gamble, Mayor Garth Gillis, Councillor Andy Henry, CAO Bob Brooks)  
(Front Row l-r: Councillor Lynn Docherty, Councillor Mary Mecher-Carlson, Deputy Mayor Virginia Cooke, Councillor Joanne Vessey)

## **Contact**

13056 Shore Road, Wood Islands, PE C0A 1R0 - Office (902) 962-2086  
Website: [www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast.com](http://www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast.com) Em: [ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com](mailto:ruralmunicipalityofbelfast@gmail.com)

## **External Links/Websites**

<http://www.ruralmunicipalityofbelfast.com/> Rural Municipality of Belfast  
<http://www3.pei.sympatico.ca/belfast.cap/public.html/> Belfast PEI  
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/municipal-governments> Municipal Affairs, GPEI

## **References**

- Wikipedia
- Municipal Councils and Contact Information – Government of Prince Edward Island
- Canada, Parks Canada Agency – Parks Canada – Provincial House National Historic Site – A Legislature for Prince Edward Island
- Lighthouses of Prince Edward Island, Beacons of Light – virtualmuseum.ca
- St. John's Presbyterian Church/Home/Welcome to St. John's – belfastchurch.ca
- Lord Selkirk Park leased out to community group – CBC News
- Belfast PEI – Welcome to Belfast, PEI – belfast.cap