

Response from Anthea and Ryan to questions posted on 19th January 2016

Which traditional crafts are still practiced in the community? i.e. weaving, knitting etc.

- We are unaware of any traditional crafts that are practised in the community at present apart from some residents who are employed to do stonework and thatching. However some of the women knit or do needle work.
- Melkhoutfontein was traditionally a fishing village and therefore the community used to make fishing rods, nets etc from the local resources such as reeds and wood.
- Yard brooms would also be made from the wood and restios (Figure 1) which are a type of plant used for thatch and prolific in the area.



Figure 1 Restios

- For decoration many would also use the shells from Alikreukel (Figure 2) as holders for dried flowers or paint shells (note that Alikreuks are now protected from harvesting and it is illegal to remove more than 10 per day and they must be over a certain size). They would also use Periwinkels (Figure 3) to make jewellery and adorn clothing.
- In our community engagement we identified two member of the community who make jewellery however they make contemporary jewellery using glass/plastic beads – such as those available anywhere. During this dialogue there was an expression of interest to learn how to make crafts that could be sold.



Figure 2 Alikreukel



Figure 3 Periwinkels

What sort of jobs do the men do in the community?

Historically men were self-employed fishermen however with diminishing fish stocks caused by overfishing through commercial gill nets few are engaged in fishing today. Indeed the location of the wiki-factory is on the site of the old Fisheries Trust building which has largely been dormant for many years.

There is approx. a 40% sustained unemployment rate in the community especially in those under 30 years. The main sectors for employment are building, cleaning, gardening, shop assistants, car washing/petrol attendants (in South Africa you still have an attendant fill up your car unlike in the UK). Note almost all jobs are in the resort town of Stilbaai. Few have access to cars and therefore rely on public transport to get to town. Very few have bikes.

Note that there is not public walkway/verge for pedestrians to get to Stilbaai therefore if they do walk they have to do so on a major road and therefore dangerous.

Due to the growth in population in Stilbaai during the holiday period many find seasonal employment for example cleaning, child care, cooking, laundry and ironing, security, beach cleansing, cleaning and general household maintenance.

In general few have developed into entrepreneurs and have their own business.

It is interesting to reflect on the historical development of Melkhoutfontein. In the 1700s they became Bond servants, in other words the land on which they had their homes were annexed by European settlers. They became Bond servants to the owners of the land and the jobs were similar to what they do today: farming, housekeeping, cleaning, building, gardening etc.

Are there animals farmed in the area?

There are a few examples but it is not a major industry in the local area.

Are the loos flushing or composting?

As shown in the launch presentation there is a 50/50 split between formal households and informal housing (shacks). The households have water borne flush toilets that are connected to the sewer system. For the shacks around 40% of the toilets are now connected to the sewer system. The remainder use septic tanks.

Please could you give us some waste stream detail, as we don't want to design things with materials that are not generally found in the area. We know there are carrier bags and film, trays, cans etc, but are there HDPE corks for example?

There is detail in the launch presentation on this – so send me queries on specific items. I'll add some photos to Community21 as well. However in regards to HDPE corks there are very few as wine is not purchased in glass bottles but in card boxes with a plastic inlay – they are referred to as 'popsuck' – which means flat bag!



Figure 4 Example of a popsuck