

••• **Sources.**

Appendices. include copies of relevant maps, designation documents, extracts from policy documents, site survey, technical information, drawings and other information not readily available. Use the appendices to keep the main body of the text brief.

(from Kate Clark, Institute of Historic Building Conservation Context 57 – March 1998)

More and more countries are turning towards a values-led approach to heritage conservation. In this approach, the significance of a heritage property is first established in a participatory process involving all those who have an interest in it. Having defined the significance (statement of significance), this becomes the framework for developing conservation policy and strategy where the condition of the property, rules and regulations, the needs of the communities, etc. are taken into account.

The World Heritage Convention is in fact an early example of a values-led approach since, from the outset, its implementation has focused on the identification and protection of OUV which is the significance that makes a place of importance to all humanity. The aim of managing World Heritage properties is therefore to guarantee the protection or the long-term maintenance of the OUV of a given property.

This values-led approach is therefore very suitable for the conservation and management of World Heritage sites; Part 3 explores this in more detail. A values-led approach has the benefit of not concentrating on fabric alone but on a broader set of values that are important not only to a group of heritage experts but to a variety of legitimate stakeholders. However, management approaches need to be responsive since these heritage values, the driving forces behind decision-making, are not static. They depend on the social groups that participate in ascribing them and they can change over time, aligning themselves with (or reacting to) shifts in wider social, cultural, environmental and use values. There will sometimes be conflict between the different heritage values attributed to a property and it will be necessary to decide their relative priorities.

The key to the values-led approach is preparing a 'Statement of Significance' and using it as the basis for determining conservation and management strategies. This concept entered the World Heritage discourse in 1995 and was included in 1997 in the OG which stated that 'the Statement of Significance should make clear what are the values embodied by the site...'. In 2000, a meeting dedicated to revising the OG (Canterbury, UK, April 2000) introduced the 'Statement of World Heritage Values'. At the 25th session of the World Heritage Committee (Helsinki, 2001) this was replaced by the more precise term 'Statement of Outstanding Universal Value', abbreviated to 'SOUV'. Finally, a definition of SOUV was included in the current OG in 2005. While paragraph 155 provides a working definition, paragraph 51 clearly states that: 'at the time of inscription of a property on the World Heritage List, the Committee adopts a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value which will be the key reference for the future effective protection and management of the property'.

In 2007 the Committee started to adopt a SOUV when inscribing the properties. But there were many inconsistencies in the style of the SOUVs, there being no agreed format for writing one until September 2008. Following research conducted by ICCROM, a workshop and a series of discussions, the World Heritage Centre and its Advisory Bodies agreed a format that is now being integrated into the *Operational Guidelines* and discussed in the *Nomination Manual*. States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the Committee are nearing the end of a process for agreeing retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for properties