paradigm shift in characterizing living heritage and in approaches to their conservation and management.

This approach has developed by comparing and contrasting the currently popular fabric based and values based approaches. While it is recognized that the application of any given approach is based on a given context and that it is up to the policy makers, practitioners or the communities to make conservation decisions, the intention is to highlight the key elements. These are summarized as follows:

- As a philosophy: it emphasizes continuity which invariably brings change as the primary driver for the definition, conservation and management of heritage.
- As a process: it facilitates a community-led (bottom-up), interactive approach to conservation and management by: emphasizing a core community and its values (recognizing the hierarchy of values and stakeholders); recognizing change as inevitable; utilizing traditional or established management systems (in terms of knowledge, practices and materials) for the long-term care of heritage and to bring reciprocal benefits.
- As a product: long-term sustainability in safeguarding heritage with an empowered community engaged in decisions made for them and their heritage.

Conclusion

The 'living heritage approach' addresses some of the gaps in the other approaches, such as diversity, context dependency and community in decision-making processes in defining, conserving and managing heritage. This approach can be primarily applicable to living heritage as characterized above, but is also easily adaptable to heritage in general. Indeed, while much of the early work on the 'living heritage approach' came out of research and pilot projects in Asia, it can be readily adapted and adopted for heritage in other contexts. In particular, living heritage is proving to be a useful framework for conservation globally where there is still a clear living heritage tradition with continuity of use (e.g. religious buildings, urban landscapes, London underground, etc.). It is also useful where communities have been cut off from their heritage by modern heritage management systems and where attempts are being made to reinstate the heritage/community relationship.

Application of the 'living heritage approach' and its implications for issues such as authenticity has been discussed and developed. These applications and implications deserve a separate paper-length discussion, but here it will suffice to highlight that approaching issues like 'authenticity' in relation to 'continuity' and 'community' (as discussed above) helps to resolve many tensions between heritage practitioners and local communities. It is hoped that this people-centred approach to conservation and management which has emerged as a result of