



## OPERATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Sigulda

The Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex



## Introduction

The main challenge presented by the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex is revitalization of this historical site – Sigulda Castle Complex.

Time has left many layers here from when the castle was built back in the 13th century through to the time it lost its importance as a military fortification in the 18th century. In 19th century the outer castle was flourishing and the castle ruins had become a popular place for lovers to go on romantic walks. In its grounds the Kropotkin family built the New Castle and established the manor centre. The traditions of tourism in Sigulda were thus initiated.

After surviving the World War I, the New Castle was given to the Latvian Association of Journalists and Writers. The manor buildings and the New Castle underwent major renovations in 1937 thus transforming the interior of the castle into a pearl of Romanticism leaving the outer facade as a sole example of the castle's historical neo-Gothic appearance.

After World War II, for almost 40 years, access to the castle grounds was restricted and medical institutions were installed in the buildings.

The revitalization of Sigulda Castle Complex was a dream by Siguldians for many years. Initially it seemed almost impossible as the site was in poor condition demanding way too much resourced from a small municipality of about 17 000 inhabitants. However, when the vision is clear and shared by majority even the most daring dreams may be reachable.

Participation in URBACT Programme was seen as one of the steps for a successful implementation of the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex. We already had started the reconstruction of the Castle Complex using the municipality's own budget. Even more – certain external co-financing agreements were already concluded although works hadn't started yet. However, perhaps the biggest challenge was not just the reconstruction of the buildings but really making the place alive and self-sustainable. Thus, the INT-HERIT project idea initiated by Baena municipality in Spain fitted perfectly with our local needs in Sigulda and we were eager to participate.

## I – Baseline Position

Sigulda Castle Complex is a protected national heritage site – it is a part of the town planning monument of state importance “Complex of Sigulda, Turaida, and Krimulda Historical Centres”. Sigulda Castle Ruins (Medieval Castle) and Sigulda New Castle are architectural monuments of state importance on their own.

Sigulda Castle Complex is a tourism destination of international importance; however, in 2012, most part of the area around the heritage site and the site itself was closed and degraded space that served simply as a narrow gateway towards Sigulda Medieval Castle. The buildings of the Castle Complex were in a critical condition, 4 out of 9 buildings were dangerous to enter and their continuity was questioned. Overall the Castle Complex buildings were not in use since the beginning of 90s when the existence of a Soviet sanatorium that was established here was terminated. Degraded buildings and territory were aggravating the image of Sigulda as a tourism destination.

Tourism is the third biggest economic sector of Sigulda Municipality. In 2012, Sigulda Medieval Castle was visited by approximately 100 000 visitors a year. However, the average time spent there was about 30-50 minutes.

Sigulda Municipality, which is the owner of Sigulda Castle Complex since the regain of independence, started discussions about the future use and possibilities of the Castle Complex involving all the possible interest groups. There were numerous interviews and meetings carried out with members of Sigulda District Council, entrepreneurs, members representing creative industries and cultural sector, local inhabitants in order to develop the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018. Thus the participatory approach was ensured from very beginning and it proved to be crucial for the success of the project.

The Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex covers a historical area of Sigulda city covering the Castle Complex including Sigulda Medieval Castle (1207), the New Castle (1881) and the manor center, which began to develop in the fore-castle area of Sigulda Medieval Castle during the 17th century.

The responsible authority for implementation of the Strategy is Sigulda Municipality, especially two of its structural units – the Territory Development Department and Sigulda Development Agency.

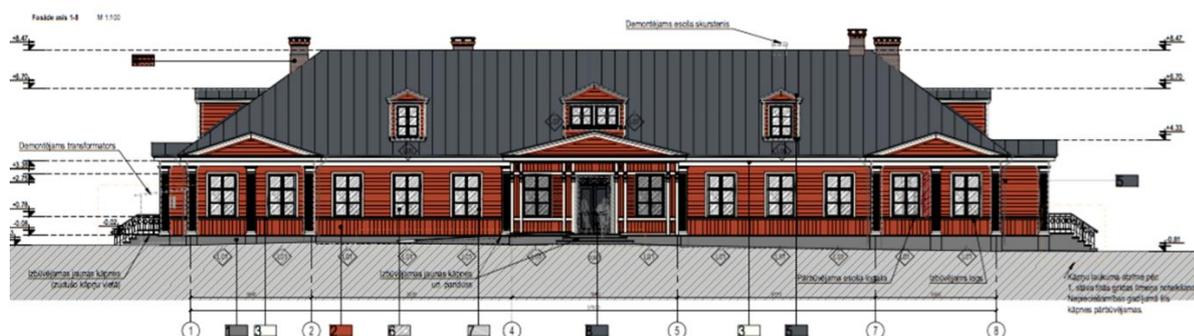
There are several integrated planning documents of Sigulda Municipality:

- the Sustainable Development Strategy of Sigulda District 2013-2038;
- the Territorial Plan of Sigulda District 2012-2024;

- the Development Programme of Sigulda District 2011-2017 followed now with the Development Programme of Sigulda District 2018-2024.

All of the documents above allow/call for the action in the field of maintenance and development of cultural heritage. In accordance to these broader planning documents the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018 (from now on – the Strategy) is a specific targeted strategy in the field of cultural heritage.

The actions that stem from the Strategy are included and budgeted under the Development Programme of Sigulda District 2011-2017 and now the Development Programme of Sigulda District 2018-2024 (containing Action Plan and Investment Plan – these documents are revised and adopted by Sigulda District Council every year).



## II – Action Plan and Barriers

The main focus of the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018 is on involvement of members of creative industries in the Sigulda Castle Complex through seeking the best scenarios and providing the most effective solutions in order to turn the Castle Complex into the creative quarter and place where creative entrepreneurs can successfully develop. To turn the area, which was considered degraded, into opened city space for a healthy lifestyle, which provides an opportunity both for the locals and the guests for recreation, education and work in a healthy and inspirational environment.

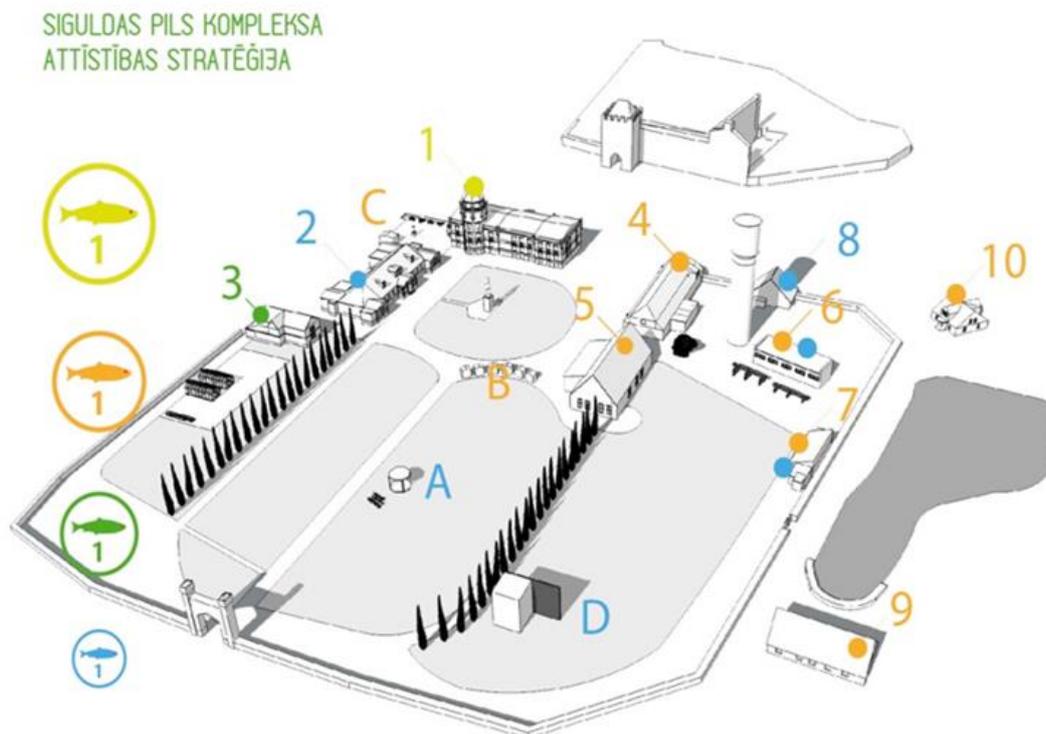
The three main objectives are the following:

- development of the centre of creative activities for both the locals and the guests (interaction between local inhabitants, entrepreneurs, guests, ensuring openness, education, social responsibility and development);
- integration of the Sigulda Castle Complex into tourism routs (a focused orientation inwards the planning process of tourism routs; development of tourism offers specific to various target groups);
- creation of environment for entrepreneurship and representation (to turn the Sigulda Castle Complex into a place where educational, private and corporative events and presentations can be held, where entrepreneurial activities can be developed).

The strategy, first of all, indicates the maintenance and development plan for all of the cultural heritage buildings. This includes developing and assigning functions to every space. The technical condition of the Castle Complex buildings differs greatly – some buildings are ready for renting out, others have to be reconstructed and restored.

Secondly, the strategy sets out a plan for new product development and promotion of competitiveness, which is a guideline of what sectors of creative industries should be involved in residing at the Castle Complex and encouraged to collaborate.

Thirdly, the strategy sets out the plan for attraction of investment, which has three positions: the budget of Sigulda District Council, the EU Structural Funds and the other financial instruments, and the private funding. The functional distribution of the Castle Complex space can be divided in four groups: culture, knowledge, creative industries and representation, and recreation; and depending on the particular function the particular funding should be attracted.



Thus the main expected results of the strategy/ action plan are the following:

- The center of creative activities for both the locals and the guests is developed;
- The Sigulda Castle Complex is integrated into tourism routs;
- Environment for entrepreneurship and representation is created.

In other words, the Sigulda Castle Complex is renewed and restored and turned into a creative quarter and place where creative entrepreneurship can successfully develop. It is a gathering place for locals and visitors for cultural, educational, creative and recreational purposes.

The main barrier foreseen certainly was the attraction of financial resources. Sigulda Castle Complex is a part of the town planning monument of state importance, which means that all the reconstruction and restoration works must be done according to regulatory provisions of cultural heritage which also builds up on the expenses.

Other barriers or rather challenges are related to tourism and culture sectors – there are other tourism and cultural products developed in near proximity which leads to competition and division of tourists and visitors. Seasonality also affects tourism related incomes (summer months make up the most active tourism season) – this presents a real challenge for the local entrepreneurs (the restaurant, the café, the creative workshops) that consider operating in the Castle Complex.

### III – Response to the Challenges

#### *Restoration and reconstruction of the Castle Complex buildings and area*

For the maintenance and development of the Sigulda Castle Complex about 13,5 million EUR have been attracted since 2009.

The first investment object was Sigulda Medieval Castle, works were finished in the end of 2012 (about 1,2 million EUR local budget + ERDF). The other large investment solely done by Sigulda Municipality was reconstruction of one of the manor buildings, the so called Stable (about 800 000 EUR). The works were completed in March 2016, and first premises were rented out to the local creative entrepreneurs.

The next milestone was a development of a large project proposal for reconstruction and revitalization of Sigulda Castle Complex for support of entrepreneurship (5 418 000 EUR budget with ERDF support). The proposal was successful and the project was finished by the end of 2018. Under this support scheme Sigulda Municipality has undertaken to create 56 new work places in the renovated buildings. By now all the newly created space has been rented out to creative entrepreneurs.

The final step regarding reconstruction of buildings this far is reconstruction and restoration of Sigulda New Castle. The works are carried out through two complementary support schemes (5 500 000 EUR budget) and are planned to be completed in 2020.

#### *Promoting entrepreneurship*

Turning previously degraded area into a lively part of the city by attracting local businesses and craftsmen to reside in the renovated spaces. Smart selection of both the Castle Complex residents and the activities that together make a good mix of attractions interesting to locals as well as visitors thus creating a constant flow of people and keeping the place alive.

Focus points:

- Maximize tourist stay + increase income;
- Crafts with DIY offers for individuals and groups;
- Different added value players: Business Incubator, Design Summer School;
- School-Bag program for local schools;
- Marketing and sales by tourism industry;
- Co-finance for new products

In order to support local entrepreneurs Sigulda municipality has introduced several support tools, such as, informative support for new and existing entrepreneurs at the Business Support Point; there is the Entrepreneurs Advisory Council established; there is a project for the youth employment over the summer break; a special trademark “Radīts Siguldā” (made in Sigulda) has been created and implemented; etc.

### *Solution to seasonality*

The tourism season in Sigulda is summer and the first part of fall when there is a natural flow of visitors attracted by beautiful nature that surrounds the Castle Complex. However, for small businesses to stay alive there is an income necessary throughout the year. Therefore, the smart selection of creative businesses that are complementary to each other and provide hands on experience is crucial. During the low season these provide educational opportunities to school children and families. Other type of complementary businesses – co-working space, photo studio, etc., and events that are organized also in low season for the local public, like skating ring in winter, ensure there are people visiting and using the space throughout the year.



Involvement in INT-HERIT made us look at some additional challenges and respond to those:

#### 1. Fostering the integrated approach:

The Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018 takes into account economic, social, environmental aspects. The funding is attracted from local municipality’s resources, from EU funds and other outside financial instruments, and from the local entrepreneurs. The tourism and cultural products are developed for the Sigulda Castle Complex to be included into the tourism routs and thus generate more income for local businesses. The strategy calls for actions that involve all the target groups and players (public bodies, local entrepreneurs, cultural and educational organizations; local inhabitants (all age and interest groups; families) and tourists).

Environmental aspects must be taken into account as Sigulda is part of the Gauja National Park and the Sigulda Castle Complex is a part of the town planning monument of state importance “Complex of Sigulda, Turaida, and Krimulda Historical Centres” thus careful attention must be paid to maintenance of the cultural heritage.

## 2. Involving local stakeholders

During the strategy’s development phase (the end of 2011) there were numerous interviews and meetings carried out with members of Sigulda District Council, entrepreneurs, members representing creative industries and cultural sector. Sigulda Municipality in collaboration with British Council in Latvia organized the City Future Game where it was made sure that all the stakeholders were represented and as a result various future scenarios were created amongst which the one that got the most support amongst all was developed into the Development Strategy of Sigulda Castle Complex 2013-2018.

During the INT-HERIT project implementation the ULG was set up consisting of members of municipality’s administration representing different sectors (territory development, culture, tourism, urban planning, education, public security, etc.), Sigulda Development Agency, representatives of entrepreneurs that reside in Sigulda Castle Complex, Vice Mayor, and highest administration. However, all the ULG meetings were kept open. Every time there were a public announcement of the meeting all the interested persons were welcomed to participate. All together there were 7 official meetings; however, there were numerous other meetings involving groups of stakeholders regarding certain every day actions. However, we have to admit that the official meetings weren’t always well attended as they felt a little artificial taking into account that the strategy implementation in Sigulda’s case was already well advanced when the project started, the course of actions were widely agreed on, and thus there weren’t many decisions to be taken to make the participation in the meetings interesting.



Yet, during the ULG meetings there were some discussions with possible impact on future developments in Sigulda Castle Complex. Thus, during a meeting in February 28, 2018, a brainstorming session was organized that resulted with the following ideas/food for thought:

- Is there anything for men to do in the Castle Complex? – sports museum with an exposition on history of sports in Sigulda (we have many Winter Olympic Game medalists from Sigulda); a barber shop?
- The Castle Complex will be a great spot for weddings – the related businesses should be promoted – make-up artists, hair dressers, photo service; a SPA using Latvian wild flowers;
- For children and families – a barefoot trail could be made; a promenade along the bank of the river valley where people can go for walks and which is baby stroller friendly (there are many trails in the forest for hikers; however, they aren't accessible with strollers);
- Sigulda Castle Complex should be made into a magnet outside the active tourism season, a place where always something happens;
- Food is important! There must be a place for coffee and tea, a restaurant, a beer garden;
- There should be a person near the entrance gate for a reference; a person who knows where all the activities are and what is currently going on; a person in costume;
- Castle Complex could be a place where Latvian dance parties are organized maybe once a week or each other week, they might grow in popularity, also interesting for foreigners;
- Outside cinema? Interesting light objects, shadow theater, contemporary street art? Virtual excursion around Sigulda telling the legend of Rose of Turaida? With possibility to actually plant a rose somewhere;
- Regular contemporary exhibition that is changed once a month so it is interesting at least once a month for locals to visit;
- Retro merry-go-round? Ice cream parlour?
- World class museum or art gallery? The new castle exposition with a guide?

In fact, a year later some of these ideas are already fully or partially realized. There is a beer garden and an ice cream shop, during events there are special activities for the kids, including merry-go-around. An idea of promenade is established in Sigulda Thematical Plan that is just recently finished. There will be an exposition in the New Castle and guided tours once the reconstruction and interior restoration works are finished there.

### 3. Measuring impact

The impact of the strategy will be measured by various outcomes:

- number of heritage buildings reconstructed/restored;
- number of small creative businesses established in the area;
- number of new workplaces created;
- amount of private investment attracted;
- number of cultural events taking place in the Castle Complex;
- number of new services created;
- increase in number of local visitors visiting the Castle Complex;
- increase in number of foreign tourists visiting the Castle Complex.

Regarding the indicators, Sigulda Municipality has to reach a set of target indicators in order to comply with local financial support requirements. The financial support schemes are set up so the beneficiary of funding has to comply in reaching certain result indicators after the actions have been carried out in order to retain full support. Sigulda Municipality has raised funding for reconstruction and restoration of various buildings of Sigulda Castle Complex through three different schemes. For each of these schemes the set of target indicators is different.

Investment project: Reconstruction and revitalization of Sigulda Castle Complex buildings to support entrepreneurship (3 buildings reconstructed):

	Initial value 2016	End of 2022
Degraded area renewed	0	2,5 ha
Workplaces created	0	56
Self-made investments by entrepreneurs	0	80 000 EUR
		2019
Energy consumption	0	53,6 MWh

Investment project: Restoration of Sigulda New Castle

	Initial value 2015	2023
Number of newly created cultural services	0	2
Number of visitors	54 700	70 000

## IV Learning Journey

Participation in INT-HERIT gave us a possibility to see how other small and medium size cities function in European Union, how they deal with similar issues. In some cases, Sigulda seemed well advanced, especially having a clear strategy and vision regarding our cultural heritage from the start before any investments were made. In other cases, there were certainly things to learn, for example, in Alba Iulia's well-advanced e-city case.

Probably the best part of the INT-HERIT project were the peer review sessions that took place in every partner city. The peer review sessions generally gave us a very good insight in partner city's problematics. For us it was a great way to allow outside opinion and fresh ideas. During the transnational meeting in Sigulda, September 25-28, 2018, a peer review session was carried out regarding the three following subjects: the former military bunker, the potential festival in the Castle Complex, and the People's Park.

The questions raised and the main finding were as following.

Questions regarding the former military bunker:

- *How to use the bunker (166 m2) along the Sigulda Castle Complex strategy?*
- *What would be the story telling of this military object? Should there be one?*
- *How does it correspond to the historical bobsleigh track of the Nature Conservation Agency that are located nearby?*

In the case of the WWII military bunker the main goal was to develop ideas for the use of the site; many ideas were presented and discussed briefly; however, most importantly:

- Keep "Bunker" in its name;
- Keep the doors;
- Leave it as it is and show it to the public.

Overall the group proposed to keep the bunker as it is now on the outside but maybe create a new programme to valorize its 'inside', for example:

- Visit the Bunker bats – create a tour to watch bats in their natural environment;
- The Bunker Food Stall – a place to stock and sell food and beverages such as cheese, butter, wine, cider; offers snacks on the way to the castle complex;
- The Bunker Bar – a thematic bar displaying the history of the place;
- The Bunker Wine cellar – a cellar to store and show to visitors local production of wines;

- The Bunker Mushroom – mushroom production start-up taking advantage of the natural environment in the bunker;
- The Bunker Team – team building place targeting school children and companies staff;
- “What happens in the Bunker stays in the Bunker”;
- Escape the Bunker – an Escape room connecting with the history of the site.

Other ideas included creation of SPA; a place for bands to play; a recording station “The Bunker studio”; cine club; an Airbnb; create a place to look at the stars by opening the ceiling.

Questions regarding the festival:

- *What would be the target audience of the festival?*
- *Which would be the best timing for the festival?*
- *How does the festival correspond to Sigulda Castle Complex strategy?*

The group discussion led to the creation of three types of proposals: When/Why to organize the festival?; How to set it up?; What should be the thematic?

When/Why?

- Sigulda is “just outside Riga”: the proximity to Riga and good connections both by road or railway is a key aspect to attract people to a major festival. In an hour, people can get from Riga airport to Sigulda Festival venue.
- Between two festivals (POSITIVUS and SUMMER SOUND): the best time to organize the festival might be between two renowned festivals that are already taking place during summer in Latvia; to differentiate from these the festival in Sigulda should focus on its particular location (green/ mountains/ sports) in opposition to a seaside location and city environment of the other two. The idea is to connect Sigulda Festival to these other festivals and attract some of the crowd there to take a one-week vacation where they can watch 2 festivals. This might be a clever strategy to increase the level of attractiveness of the festival.
- What is in it for Sigulda? Brand promotion & economic development. The organization of a festival has impacts on the local economy but the temporary nature of events makes a sort of a bubble that soon disappear. More important are the stronger impacts in brand creation, i.e. the promotion of the city visibility that such an event can produce. A good festival could definitely put the city on the map and will bring more visitors for the city through brand promotion of city associated with the festival.

How?

- Make it good and give it time to grow: don't go straight to a big event, start small but make it very good and then let it grow in time. It takes time to build a reputation so don't expect to have results of the first or second year. The plan should cover 3-5 years in order to really measure results.
- Franchise it or not? There are some interesting examples in Europe of very successful festivals that are replicas of other bigger festivals. The main advantage is to use a brand already established in the market. An example is the case of the famous "Primavera Sound" festival taken place in Barcelona (Spain) every year that now has a second version in Porto (Portugal); this has lower budget, not so well known musicians on the set but it keeps attracting crowds from abroad as people are already familiar with the concept from Barcelona.
- Spread costs to 2 or 3 days festival: people may be attracted to a multi-day festival to spread their costs; campground in Peoples' Park is another possibility to keep the costs down.
- One or multiple stages (22 hectares/max 5 000 people stage inside the old castle): the limitation of seats inside the castle is a limitation to the festival growth. One solution could be the creation of multiple stages across the area of the castle complex to allow simultaneous concerts. The wide area of the complex allows the creation of different listening environments without interfering with each other.

What?

- Theme oriented (nature, culture, climate etc.): the group suggested that the festival should be theme oriented in order to integrate the overall strategy of the city, pointing to the city main assets that are nature and culture, maybe connecting it to as nature protection or climate change mitigation.
- Day - family; night – crazy: the idea behind it is to attract both young people and families in order to target different segments of the market; during the day the concept of the festival is more family-oriented while later at night it becomes an atmosphere targeting particularly young people.
- Specific musical area? This aspect raised a lot of discussion. Some think that associating the festival to a specific musical area could be beneficial, namely attracting the lovers of that musical scene; others prefer a wide selection of genres. The case of electronic music is quite successful. For example, Tomorrowland (Belgium) or Untold (Romania) are festivals capable of attracting more than 300,000 people. Some are organized in remote areas and still able to attract the crowds such as the Boom Festival (Portugal). However, this may not be the right selection for the site and the city strategy. A difficult choice indeed as it depends of the objectives set by the municipality and what type of impacts it is expecting.
- Only music? Food trucks, open air movies, art performances are important complements to the music itself and provides the relaxed environment that will

bring other segments to the event. The ‘Beautiful Days’ festival, a three-day festival held close to Devon (UK), is a good example of this type of festival. The festival which has no corporate sponsorship or branding was pronounced "Best Family Festival" by the UK Festival Awards. With a capacity of 17,500 seats (all sell out in advance) it can be a good example to be followed by Sigulda.

Questions regarding the People’s Park:

- *To golf or not to golf?*
- *How to attract the investments and keep the green area without increasing city’s expenditure?*
- *Would this investment fit with Sigulda Castle Complex strategy?*

The discussion about the pros and cons of investing on golf courses turned into a broader discussion about tourism development. In general golf attracts wealthy people that spend a lot more than the ordinary tourist. It requires building also a hotel of the same level.

However, a golf course comes with a risk of losing the identity of the place. A golf course doesn’t seem to match the spirit of this cultural heritage site and may prevent to fully develop the envisaged strategy of the Castle Complex.

Therefore, the group developed an alternative strategy that might be helpful for the municipality planners:

- Focus on a family & child – promoting the use of the park among families and children is more connected with the overall strategy for the Castle Complex; it will not only engage citizens in nature and sport activities but will also provide a complementary offer to the castle itself. It could be integrated in the tour of the castle and thus offer more than just a cultural visit instead becoming more an ‘experiments’ site.
- No need big investors — small investments in the park can produce important changes in its use.
- Event space – building low cost temporary structures can promote the organization of events in the place;
- Outdoor fitness – the investment in outdoor fitness gear is not that expensive and will promote the use of the park among citizens of all ages;
- Outdoor furniture – minimum outdoor furniture will allow other activities in the park (ex. Barbecue; playground furniture; tree houses)
- Festival campground – part of the park could be used as campground during the festival (a temporary use);
- Olympic theme – the park programme can evolve from the Olympic theme, promoting the place as a sports park and complement the city strategy of

developing winter sports facilities (as the modern bobsleigh). Examples are a tree trampoline, adventurous playground, radical sports, etc.

- Wood Cabins – light wood cabins could support land art outdoor exhibitions, workshops where the handcraft start-up experience could be shared with the new entrepreneurs.
- Health tourism – nature is an important theme in Sigulda and could be exploited, namely by creating a “Connect to nature” programme with forest therapy, nature education, etc.



The list of ideas and fresh views on possible developments of Sigulda Castle Complex and its nearby area shows the value of participation in INT-HERIT project and the application of the URBACT approach.

Yet, an other opportunity Sigulda took in frame of the INT-HERIT project was organizing a local exchange visit for the ULG members. A working group consisting of 17 ULG members visited Kuldīga and Liepāja on 23-24<sup>th</sup> of April, 2019.

Kuldīga is among rare historic towns where a number of solid wooden buildings have been preserved, the old town of Kuldīga is a candidate for inclusion in the UNESCO List of World Cultural Heritage. The town administration has exceptional experience and knowledge of maintaining and preserving the cultural heritage while keeping the old town alive with summer events and festivals in the summer season and all year around.

Ventspils Castle is one of the oldest and most well-preserved Livonian Order castles remaining, in that it has retained its original layout since the 13th century. After extensive renovations in 2001 the castle became a home to the Ventspils museum, which has been recognized as one of the most modern museums in the Baltics. The castle is now one of the most visited sites in Kurzeme.

In Kuldīga and Ventspils meetings with various members of town administration and local architects, museum director, and other specialists were carried out to ensure the exchange of knowledge related to contemporary maintenance of cultural heritage. This involves almost all the areas of daily life as the cultural heritage composes an integral part of both towns involved in exchange. Also the guided site visits were organized. The exchange of knowledge with other towns of Latvia that have an essential background in this field are important to furthermore develop and manage the Sigulda Castle Complex. The experience of these towns is especially valuable as they have the same national laws and regulations, so their approach can be more easily followed and adjusted to our own needs.



## V Synthesis

The most important ingredient for the successful implementation of Sigulda Castle Complex Development Strategy was the clear vision and objectives that were agreed on by the vast majority of all the stakeholders before any investments were made. This insured also stability through the municipality election period. The course of implementation of the strategy wasn't affected by some changes in political representation.

The overall investment for a small city's budget was huge. The investments into the reconstruction of the Castle Complex were only possible because the overall objectives were clear and the Castle Complex was given a priority over other municipality needs. This wouldn't be possible without a clear vision from the very start.

Another important aspect that has to be taken into account is that things change and things take time, so some room for flexibility and compromise always should be envisaged. The strategy was planned to be implemented by 2018, which did not happen. The New Castle is still under reconstruction and it might take still a year and a half

before it is opened to public. Also, some buildings in the Castle Complex initially were assigned different functions; however, because of the funding requirements, some functions had to be changed or switched locations. All of this is fine as long as we keep the bigger picture in front of us.

The final point. Restoration of cultural monuments is very expensive; therefore, we believe that the use of public money can only be justified if the restored spaces are used and at least the maintenance costs are covered through the usage – it can be income through ticket sales or rental cost. In case of Sigulda one part of the renovated spaces is all rented out to creative local businesses and the other part – the New Castle - will be opened to public providing new services - an interactive exposition, a wedding hall, an exhibition space, and the income of these newly created services will cover the maintenance cost of the cultural monument. The complex and well together linked approach allows not only to cover the maintenance costs of the cultural heritage but promotes local businesses, local craftsmanship, strengthens tourism sector, and has overall influence on socio economic development of the city.

The recipe of Sigulda Castle Complex success story:

- Clear vision and objectives are crucial;
- Involve stakeholders right from the beginning;
- Step by step approach;
- Leave room for flexibility;
- Things take time.

Yet, every city has to find its own recipe from ingredients it has. The good news is that some techniques can be barrowed, and participation in URBACT promotes this to happen.

