

LOCAL ARCHEO PLAN

institution, manager or investor:

Rousse Regional Museum of History,
7000 Rousse, 3 Battenberg sq., Bulgaria

archaeological site, park or group of sites:

Medieval town of Cherven

name of the archaeological site, park or group of sites

identification of the archaeological site or group of sites:

National Archeological Preserve Medieval town of Cherven

name or number of the site(s) in the national register of archaeological sites and monuments

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Local Archo Plan number, place and date of publication

..1/1, Rousse, Bulgaria, 2022.....

*(number 1/1 for the first edition of the plan, number 1/2 for the updated version of the first edition,
number 2/1 for the second edition, ...)*

Logotypes

INSTRUCTIONS:

The plan covers all principal areas of intervention necessary for the establishment or running of an archaeological park. When preparing your Local Archeo Plan you can decide to include only some of the proposed chapters, as you possibly have only to upgrade an already functioning situation.

You probably need to adapt some definitions mentioned in the plan (maybe your area is not an archaeological park, but something else: you can modify wording, but be consistent through the whole document).

To support you in the preparation of your Local Archeo Plan we included hints and questions, marked in grey color, which you should consider in order to find the right solutions for your archaeological park. Other aspects could probably be important for your situation: the included questions only act as a starting point. After you have defined and explained your solutions, you can remove the examples.

If you use abbreviations, please include at the end of your plan a list outlining them. If necessary, you can also include a glossary.

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Local Archeo Plan number:	1/1	
Place and date of publication:	Rousse, Bulgaria, 15.06.2022	

BASIC INFORMATION OF THE SITE	
Name of the site(s):	Medieval town of Cherven
Name or number of the site(s) in the national register of archaeological sites and monuments:	
City, town:	Village of Cherven
Region:	Rousse
Country:	Bulgaria
Complete cadastral reference:	
Landowner(s):	National state
Manager:	Rousse Regional Museum of History
Investor(s):	
Responsible monument protection institution:	Rousse Regional Museum of History

1. INTRODUCTION

Reasons for preparing the plan and its objectives:

This Local Archaeological Plan is being prepared in order to achieve a long-term strategy for the management of the site Medieval town of Cherven, with the help of which to achieve sustainable development. The purpose of this plan is to draw up common rules that apply to site managers as well as to visitors and local communities. The rules will be able to achieve the results set out in the plan. The existence of this plan will support the process of valorization of local cultural heritage, will highlight the values and benefits for all stakeholders. The plan will overcome the disinterest and distancing of local communities, from which everyone will benefit. The implementation of the Local Archaeological Plan envisages long-term management and maintenance of the site, as well as:

- Planning of conservation and restoration works to present architectural elements of the medieval city in a new environment. This activity will not only preserve the found remains of archeological excavations, but will also help to better interpret them.
- A plan will be prepared to train staff in the possibilities of interpreting the cultural heritage in order to achieve a better presentation of the archaeological remains.
- The plan will also envisage the development of new ways to involve the local population, whose support is key to the development of the site in the future. With the help of the local population, the supply of local cultural products related to heritage will also increase.
- Planning activities to help people learn about heritage are especially important for the implementation of the Local Archaeological Plan, as they will include museum educational programs. In them the main focus is the local cultural heritage, and its study is a form of involving communities and individuals in the responsibility for the preservation and presentation of the medieval town of Cherven.
- The plan also includes a strategy for audience development, as the increase in the tourist flow is a strong sign of success of the Plan and the management set in it.

Our VISION:

Medieval Cherven is a remarkable city, with impressive ruins set in a memorable landscape. The museum team wants to turn the Medieval Cherven into an attractive public place to visit, relax, culture and education, an element of the cultural identity of local communities and a tourist attraction with unforgettable stories.

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

2.1. Identification of the local archaeological heritage and its conservation status

Type of archaeological site(s) taken into consideration:

Medieval city - fortress. The ancient fortress walls have been preserved. 16 churches, workshops, a castle, towers and squares, underground tunnels with water sources have been discovered from the medieval town.

Types of archaeological remains taken into consideration:

Fortress walls – the walls are visible from afar, they emphasize the importance of the city

Watchtower - the tower is on four floors, and today there is a ladder and an observation deck

Castle - the castle has its own walls and church

Archbishop's church - this church is distinguished by size and decoration, with graffiti inscriptions on its walls

Other churches - each church indicates a separate neighborhood, and the diversity in their plans and location shows the history of the city

Underground spring - there are two water facilities that are unique among the fortresses in our country

Workshops - the presentation of the workshops will show the diversity of life in the medieval city

Houses with shops - houses with shops are an element of the urban environment that distinguish the city as an important commercial place.

Spatial extension of the archaeological site(s):

The archeological remains are the main exhibits located in situ on a hill near the village of Cherven. The total size of the archeological reserve is 70 decares, and most of them - probably about 2/3 have been studied. The site has been studied since 1910, but nevertheless modern research is becoming increasingly important as it provides more information - both about the artifacts that are being discovered and the structure of the medieval city. Even at the moment, the site can be turned into an archeological park, as it is located near the Nature Park, so the two infrastructures can complement each other.

Dating of the archaeological site(s):

The medieval town of Cherven exhibits archeological remains from the time of late Antiquity, as well as from the period 11-16 century. The chronology of the site has been established; historical sources know about the destruction of the city by the Wallachian voivode Mihai Vityaz at the end of the 16th century.

Research status of the archaeological site(s):

The medieval town of Cherven is only partially studied archaeologically. In the beginning, the research was not systematic, a church was revealed, which was at the highest point of the hill. This church, in which the archbishop served, is known as the church №1. To date, 15 more churches have been studied. Four years ago, a new sector was discovered in the western direction, where it was assumed that there was a fortress wall with a door, which turned out to be a church. The sector is being studied, new parts of the city's structure are being discovered, some of the frescoes of the temple have been discovered, as well as a coin treasure of Bulgarian, Byzantine and Wallachian coins from the end of the 14th century. The area, which is considered an archeological park, also includes sites for archeological research. The studied remains are partially exposed, and some of them are awaiting conservation and restoration. Rouse Regional Museum of History has been researching the medieval city for the last 50 years. The archival documentation of these studies is kept in the Rouse Museum, as well as in the National Archaeological Institute with a museum at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Most of the results of archaeological research have been published. The Rouse Regional Museum of History preserves the restored artifacts and displays them in an exposition that was renovated in the fall of 2021.

Conservation, restoration and presentation status of the archaeological site(s):

Walls, castle, churches, houses have been preserved and restored sparingly. The ruins are on public display. Church №2 is covered with a protective structure that protects it from rain. The watchtower has survived in time, was partially damaged after the 1977 earthquake, and then preserved. Conservation activities are mainly in the outlines of the Upper Town from antiquity.

Ten important places are presented and interpreted in situ, and another seven have been selected to increase the awareness of the place. In this way all its parts will be covered. An exposition with artifacts from the site presents the Rouse Museum, which popularizes the medieval city and upgrades the interpretation of the place.

2.2. Historical and cultural significance of the local archaeological heritage

Archaeological, historical, and artistic significance of each type of archaeological remains:

Fortress walls - the walls are a key element of the fortification of the city, and the discovery of the various stages of their construction is of national importance. The walls are largely preserved.

Watchtower - the tower is a memorable sign of the Medieval Red and has national dimensions. It is largely preserved in its authentic form and has important historical and cultural significance.

Castle - the center of power in the medieval city is concentrated in the castle, where, according to reconstructions, there was a building with six floors.

Archbishop's church - thanks to research, two churches of the archbishop and one episcopal are known.

They testify to the conquest of the city by the Ottoman Turks, when the Christian leader moved from the most prestigious place in the city, to its outskirts.

Other churches - each church indicates a separate neighborhood, and the diversity in their plans and location shows the history of the city. One of the churches has been turned into a mosque.

Underground spring - the two underground springs are preserved from the past in authentic form and are unique as facilities that have reached us since the Middle Ages.

Ecological significance of the archaeological site(s):

The archeological site is integrated into the local natural landscape - the fortress is located on a plateau on a hill in a valley with a canyon. The place is located in a valley with caves - many of which are rock churches located in the Nature Park. The environment is harsh - the rocks weather and become unstable, they collapse. The vegetation is aggressive and without maintenance can easily take over the ruins.

2.3. Social and economic significance of the local archaeological heritage

Use the two following questionnaires to identify the ways in which different stakeholders use and perceive the structures and areas occupied by archaeological remains .They can be adapted to suit your local situation .Some data can be sourced from existing economic ,touristic ,social or demographic statistics ,urban planning documents ,and periodical activity reports produced by various local institutions and organizations.

Types of activities conducted in structures/ areas occupied by archaeological remains	Yes	No	Permanent	Occasional / seasonal
Habitation		X		
Movement/traffic		X		
Agriculture		X		
Other economic activities		X		
Touristic activities	X			X
Recreational activities	X			X
Cultural activities	X			X
Educational activities		X		
Religious activities		X		
Other public activities	X			
....				

Type of economic activity	Permanent	Occasional/ seasonal	Organizers
Exhibition			
Souvenir shops		X	RRMH, private sector
Guided tours		X	RRMH
Re-enactment festival		X	RRMH
Traditional crafts festival			
Concert		X	RRMH, private sector
....			

2.4 Accessibility of the archaeological site(s)

Physical accessibility

- There are places for rest, bins, toilets, benches, fountains for free drinking water;
- There are no fenced areas;
- No access for pedestrian, bicycle and / or motorized traffic; no access for people with mobility, hearing or vision problems; There is no connection with the public transport system;
 - There are no lighting and security systems;
 - There are no stations for recharging electronic devices and vehicles;
 - Tickets are sold on site by a museum employee.

Informational accessibility

- the site has explanatory panels, printed guides in different languages;
- Internet is available on the site;
- There are other sources of digital information - QR codes;
- On the site there is an opportunity to use a guide and guided tours;

2.5 Existing legal and administrative framework of the archaeological site(s)

The site is an exclusive state property;

- RRMH is responsible for administration and maintenance;
- The budget of the site is part of the budget of RRMH, and the source is the Ministry of Finance;
- The site is included in the local and regional plans / strategies for preservation, promotion and valorization of the local archeological heritage, including programs for cultural tourism;
- The site is integrated into existing tourist flows of the Danube passenger ships;

3. FEASIBILITY STUDY

3.1 Identification of the legal and administrative framework

<p>Legal form of organization of your park</p> <p>Possible options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular business entity; • Cooperative; • Subsidiary or branch of an existing cultural institution (e.g. a museum); • Not-for-profit organization. <p>You will have to take into consideration the respective provisions in the laws and regulations of your country, including those concerning employment, tax regimes, archaeological heritage protection etc.</p>
<p>Organizational statutes of your park</p> <p>Cultural Heritage Act, 2009</p> <p>Law on protection and development of culture, 1999</p>
<p>Legal and administrative framework of your park</p> <p>You will have to take into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local urban development policies; • Regulations concerning the issuing of building and other structural works permits; • Local, regional or national master plan for developing cultural tourism; • Legalownership status of the site, including land, structures, access routes etc.

3.2 Design, development and management options

<p>Characteristics of the site, or part of it, which will be developed into an archaeological park The site has a high degree of preservation, and the archaeological remains are impressive in size. This has a direct impact on possible interventions, as it does not require much effort to rebuild the fortress. Regardless of the condition of the fortress in ruins, it is memorable for its location and characteristic landscape. The site is located in a sparsely populated area, with an elderly population and low investment opportunities. The nearby town of Rouse has all the opportunities to support the development of the medieval town of Cherven as an important place for local communities and an attractive tourist destination. The restaurant located at the foot of the fortress is still the only site that serves the tourist flow, although it is the only one.</p>
<p>Existing and necessary human resources to design and implement your LAP</p> <p>Specialists in conservation, gardening and interpretation are needed for the implementation of the LAP, which are continuous processes in this place.</p>

Required works

- Conservation and restoration works - after periodic reports;
- Works for improvement and presentation - constant commitment;
- Infrastructure and utilities - expansion of services;
- Protective equipment - creating a distinctive design;

Timetable

2022 - creation of new interpretation displays

2023 - increase in visitor services; installation of solar lighting

2024 - approval of an animation program

The economic, social and cultural impact

To determine the extent of the impact, studies will be carried out to identify:

- Degree of interest and support for your proposal within the wider local community, business environment and tourism industry in the region of Ruse;
- The economic marketability of the park, based on the objectives, in accordance with the current economic and social conditions;
- The cultural marketability of your park, based on the goals as well as the perceived cultural value of the archaeological heritage, according to the perception of consumers.

3.3 Estimated implementation and maintenance costs; potential funding options

Design and implementation costs

- Personnel, including expertise, for conservation plan;
- Equipment, materials and consumables;
- Infrastructure and landscaping works;
- External service providers - animation, concerts, festivals;
- Media campaigns and other public events.

Possible ways to offset your costs:

- Sponsorships (cash or in kind);

Possible funding options

Depending on the local conditions and your legal form of organization, you have the following options:

- Direct funds granted by the municipality in the form of annual targeted subventions, according to the Cultural Heritage Act;
- Annual allocations or targeted subsidies from the national budget - for the activities of the

museum.

- National or international grants won through an open competition;
- Sponsorship by public and private persons and individuals;
- Special fundraising events with the help of non-profit association "Friends of the Museum" - Rousse;
- Entrance and other fees paid for various services for visitors - as part of the museum's budget;
- Other income: sales from book, craft and souvenir shops.

Ticketing system

At this time, the following ticketing system exists

- Basic entrance tickets - for single visitors
- Discounted tickets - for group visits
- Family and group tickets
- Special events tickets - for concerts, reconstructions, fairs

3.4 Identification of the target public and their expectations

Methods for identifying audiences and their expectations:

- Target questionnaires in the museum's expositions - in halls and outdoors;
- Public seminars and lectures with Q&A approach - at regular events for archaeological research;
- Media campaigns, events for audiences.

With each of the methods we will achieve knowledge of various expectations of visitors, some will be before the visit, and others - after the visit. In this way, a deeper knowledge of the audiences will be achieved, as well as their attitude towards the archeological park.

4. LOCAL ARCHEO PLAN

4.1. Integration within local urban planning

Situation of your site in relation to urban planning issues:

The archeological zone that we would like to improve is not part of an urban structure, but it is on the outskirts of a settlement - the village of Cherven. The protection of the archeological site can be improved by establishing entrance and exit facilities for pedestrians, which are currently lacking. The improvement of our region can also be achieved by raising the level of awareness - of historical knowledge, archaeological research and interpretation.

The site does not have a separate buffer zone, as its approaches are the end of the settlement on one side and the Nature Park on the other. Thus, the archeological site has around it areas that merge into the one that contains the elements of cultural heritage and have the functions of buffer zones. In this area there is electricity and water supply, there is a restaurant and sanitary areas. There is a water supply at the top of the plateau, and electricity is only at the base of archaeologists. There is a project created with the help of local communities, which will illuminate the walls from the outside, and will illuminate the path at the foot, using photovoltaic power to electric lamps. The project is awaiting approval from the National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture.

The archeological site has a low level of connection, as signposts are placed only on the first-class road Sofia - Rousse. There are no signposts on secondary roads. No cycling routes and walking routes have been built.

4.2. *In situ* display, conservation and restoration of archaeological remains

Conservation and display issues:

Many of the archeological remains discovered in the medieval town of Cherven are on display and can be shown to the public. This is about 80% of the studied area, as well as most of the architectural remains. The parts that are not exposed are a part of a necropolis, a pottery workshop, as well as the churches № 15 and № 16, which are the latest archeological excavations. At Church №16, the study is not yet complete. These places are not separated from the exposed part of the site, where during the active season the research takes place in front of the visitors. The area of the necropolis has been reburied and remains undisturbed. In some of the burials discovered near the temples of the medieval city, a reburial was performed with an Orthodox priest, as archaeologists disturbed the peace of old Christians.

In order to preserve the authenticity of the medieval city, gentle interventions are planned, which strengthen the walls and partially restore structures in order to visually perceive the architectural structure. There are no completely restored structures in the site, which allows for the interpretation of the individual parts, as well as for assessing the authentic appearance of the site.

After archeological excavations, the discovered architectural structures are covered with geotextile, which is used for temporary conservation until the time when a conservation project is prepared and restored. All materials used in this process are organic. The stones that are discovered in the process of research are always used. Too often the original substance of the archeological remains is consolidated and what is found is not reconstructed. During the warm seasons we use chemicals to control the vegetation that destroys the walls.

The physical display of the remains is accompanied by guided tours, information boards, QR codes with more information in different languages, digital products for mobile applications.

Archaeological remains are not moved, as their importance is revealed on the spot. Too rarely can some remains be interpreted in a different context than that of a medieval city. The further research we are planning serves for the gradual accumulation of information about the different parts of the city, about the currency exchange and in general cannot change the main characteristics of the archeological site. These studies are set to be carried out by the Rousse Museum and will take place in the next five years.

Additional protection structures and procedures:

The archeological site needs additional protective facilities during the preservation and presentation of the temples located in the city. Only at the church №16 a painting was discovered, which was removed from the walls and preserved in order to be transferred to a new bearing base. It is planned to transfer the frescoes to the Rouse Museum, as well as to exhibit them. Some of the churches need shelters for protection from the weather. The site is part of a belt with a harsh continental climate, with temperatures reaching minus 20 degrees in winter and rising to plus 40 in summer. This activity for the preparation of protective equipment will be carried out by the Rouse Museum with the help of external specialists in the next ten years.



4.3. Surveillance and monitoring systems

Needs regarding surveillance and monitoring of visitors of your site:

The need for a system of observation or monitoring is an important element of the management of the archaeological site. Surveillance is needed to collect quality data on visitors in future planning, to monitor the number of visitors and their origin, age, as well as to prevent unwanted activities such as vandalism, robbery, illegal treasure hunting. The collected and processed information about the number of visitors will be interpreted by museum staff for the needs of the successful management of the site.

The access to the site is with paid entrance and with working hours, which are different according to the seasons. In the cold winter months, it is not possible to work outdoors, so the site is open only by prior request. Access to the site is paid at a time when a historical restoration or concert is being held.

Although we expect the behavior of visitors to be gentle on the archeological remains and the environment, we will install inscriptions to remind the expected behavior, care for the park and the need for safety of visitors. It is necessary to build entrance and exit facilities, which are locked after working hours. In this way, the responsibility for the integrity of the archeological site increases. Violators of the law have been known in the region for years - illegal treasure hunting, and restricting the entrances to the fortress will prevent them from appearing.

The site does not have security cameras installed, as there is no electricity on the site. This type of security is not provided, as the site is located in a sparsely populated area.

4.4. Landscaping

Landscape enhancements at your site:

Among the most important features of the site in terms of cultural landscape are the outlines of the Watchtower and the fortress walls. These are important hereditary elements that are present in photographs from the last century, as well as in sketches and engravings from two centuries ago. Landscaping is not a priority in this particular archaeological environment, as several very important reasons related to this process are missing. Above all, the site is a medieval city. We know that this type of city is densely populated. For this reason, there are no places in them to develop public gardens. Wide places were the squares, which are also used for markets. The medieval town of Cherven is located on a plateau on a hill among the meanders of the river Cherny Lom. The soil layer is very thin, so woody plant species are almost impossible to plant in this place. At the same time, the soil is sufficient for the emergence of grass and shrubs, which must be controlled, as they threaten not only the appearance but also the stability of the walls.

It is possible to create a park landscape in the lower parts of the medieval city - the Lower City, located on the riverside terrace. No archeological excavations have been carried out there. Some of these spaces have been used for centuries as gardens watered by the river. Therefore, they have domestic house species - fruit - plums, apples, pears. At the same time, because these gardens have not been cultivated for a decade, most of them have been taken over by invasive vegetation. Wild walnut - alyantos, is particularly dangerous and spreads quickly, and at the same time is not a food base for animal species. Its presence poses a threat to the natural way of life as well as to the cultural landscape.

The configuration of the terrain is not suitable for visitors with disabilities, as the archeological site is located on top of a hill, with a height of about 80 meters, which is reached by steps. Any intervention here would damage the authenticity of the local landscape. It is possible to think of some kind of elevator or funicular to be camouflaged. In order to increase the accessibility of the place, information boards will be placed in the lower part of the site, near the parking lot, which will overcome some of the information barriers.

The archeological site has many places that have impressive views of the surrounding area, the village, the river and its meanders. Located on a high hill, the site has a good view of the parts of the medieval city. Some parts of it can also be used for a picnic. In the lower part there are meadows by the river, and in the upper part there are spaces in the Castle, in the town located west of the Watchtower, and near the archeological base, where there is a fountain with drinking water.

Although vegetation in general is perceived as a threat, ornamental vegetation typical of the daily life of the local population could be considered - for example, creeping roses, roses, which form arches in some places, thus making the landscape more human.

4.5. Mandatory infrastructure and services

Accessibility:

There is a possibility for parking in the immediate vicinity of the archeological park. The place is not big, but the street that connects the village with the fortress is also used for parking.

Currently, a private company organizes a bus connection between the village of Cherven and the city of Ruse, but this line is not direct, but serves other villages, so it cannot be used for tourist transport.

In the future, one can think of a station for charging electric bicycles, as the museum already has experience in this area and has been managing ten electric bicycles for rent for five years. There is no station for electric cars and it is not planned to build at the moment.

Basic park infrastructure and services: At the moment, the paths of the archeological site are not lit, and after working hours it does not receive visitors. As it only works in daylight, the site does not need lighted alleys. At the same time, the construction of lighting fixtures with an alley contrast with the authenticity of the archeological site. At the same time, there is a project to build a system of lighting fixtures powered by solar energy, located outside the fortress walls, as well as at the bottom of the site, near the parking lot. In this way it will be possible to illuminate the fortress walls in limited hours of the day, which is an important condition for achieving ecological balance. The light at night will illuminate the imposing walls, but at the same time will attract or repel the wild inhabitants of the Rusenski Lom river valley. In the lower part of the park there are still places for rest. It is planned to place benches in the upper part, in the immediate archeological environment, which is why a design is needed, which is gentle in terms of the authenticity of the environment. From the proposals made, options with or without a canopy will be selected. In the areas around the site there are separate picnic areas that do not have facilities for protection from the sun or rain. There are dangerous places for the visitors on the site. These are the ends of the plateau, from where a beautiful view is revealed, but a precipice begins. These places are indicated by signs, with railings, but often the instructions are ignored. Additional signposts are needed, as well as solid partitions. There are also places in the site that need to be built paths that pass over archaeological remains. For this purpose it is necessary to make a project for each specific solution on site. The areas will then be secured and marked to protect both the ruins and visitors.

There is a place for waste collection in the parking lot, and the waste is collected by a specialized company that works under a contract with the municipality of Ivanovo. The place is suitable for pets, and waste can be collected in the parking lot. We do not provide separate bins for dog waste, as the infrastructure of the site does not require the necessary maintenance.

In the lower part of the archeological site, next to the parking lot, there is a small restaurant, where there are also separate toilets. Unfortunately, they are not adapted for the disabled, and no new construction is currently planned. The area of the archeological site is covered by mobile operators, and free Wi-Fi can be used near the archeological base. At the moment, there are no plans to build free charging stations for smartphones, as the archeological site lacks electricity.

Interpretation and interpretative media

Choosing the right work team and assessing your inventory:

Interpretations of the archeological site will contribute to its easier understanding by wide audiences, will overcome the difference between scientific and popular speech. The interpretation will be based on different styles of activity to reach a wide audience.

Topics from the everyday way of life, from the possible inhabitants of the medieval city, related to different professions and lifestyles, will be offered for interpretation. Elements of the fortification as well as characteristic buildings will also be offered for interpretation.

Objectives, themes and visitor analysis of interpretive planning:

Through the interpretation, visitors will gain knowledge about the past, information about everyday life, deep context in which the place existed. As a result, visitors can feel the stopped time and the pleasure of hitherto with an unknown world. We expect visitors to come again.

The main message of our interpretation is **Immersion in the past**. The topic will be developed with subtopics, depending on the space of the archeological site.

The interpretation is created for the main visitors of the site - individual adult visitors. They come to the site because here they are impressed by authentic ruins and the opportunity to be outdoors, combined with an impressive cultural landscape. With the interpretations we hope to attract visitors and families with children.

Maintenance: Regular maintenance of the site is extremely important for the overall appearance, as well as general maintenance - toilets, paths, fences, signs and information panels, lawn mowing, garbage disposal. A maintenance officer will be hired to be in charge of mowing the lawn, and other activities will be part of the engagements of other museum staff. The information about the park will be part of the general information about the museum and its events, shared with the media and social networks.

Choosing the right interpretive media for your site:

The interpretation of the site will affect the site as a whole, as well as some of its main elements. The main theme will be the everyday way of life in the medieval city - this is a theme that is not part of historical events or chronology. In the process of communication we will use more than one media. Guided tours are a tool that focuses on specific topics and suggests interactivity. Printed brochures are provided.

We plan to deploy interpretive panels to become fulcrums in the process of general interpretation of the site. Some of them will include QR codes, as well as a connection to a smartphone app. Undoubtedly, the archeological site needs a center for interpretation, but at the moment there is no possibility for its construction. Therefore, for such a center we will use some of the expositions of the Rouse Museum.

List the features, locations or areas that you will interpret with your interpretation media

Table №

- 1 in the parking lot, in the approaches to the stairs - for 16 churches, which are the size of the city
- 2 in front of the horse harness to the entrance - for the movement of horsemen in the city
- 3 to church 7 - for the saint - patron who guards the wall and for the Patriarch of Constantinople Callistus, donor of the church
- 4 to the church 1 - for the weaving estates for gold-woven fabrics
- 5 in the Lapidarium - for architectural elements - Lombard arches, columns, capitals
- 6 in the Castle - for the rooms of Queen Anna-Maria of Hungary, for the Minister of Foreign Affairs "Logothete"
- 7 in the Castle - for the name of Red
- 8 in the Tower - for the prison and the place of punishment
- 9 in front of the Western Gate - for the saints - the patrons of the fortress walls
- 10 Ivanovo - why rock churches? "He who has a cave will be saved"
- 11 Ivanovo - everyday life of the monks
- 12 Ivanovo - drawbridge, for safety and self-insulation
- 13 Ivanovo - a painting understandable to insiders
- 14 Ivanovo - the caves - man, nature, religion

We will use the following interpretive media:

- information boards on site
- a system of QR codes that will increase information
- leaflets-guides to direct to separate parts of the archeological park
- treasure hunters - smartphone app

We choose these media because they complement and contribute to the compilation and implementation of a comprehensive interpretive plan. Due to the size of the archeological park, as well as due to the limited resources, we envisage non-personal media for interpretation.

Implementation and evaluation:

In general, what we plan is within reasonable limits of funding and resources, which will allow us to implement our chosen interpretive media. Of course, there are opportunities to expand the scope of this action, but we believe that it is necessary to feel the planned impact and then upgrade. Part of the planned media - information boards on site, we have valued and will be realized soon. For others, we will pledge funds in the next budget. Seasonal maintenance of the facilities is also planned.

All interpretive texts will be consulted by an expert in interpretation, thus increasing the effect of the whole process. Observations, interviews and surveys, which will be conducted once a month, are planned to measure the results. We will need new staff for this purpose, but at the moment no such staff is planned, although there is a need for such staff.

4.6. Commercial infrastructure and services

Including commercial facilities and services at your site:

- Including commercial facilities and services on your site:
- At present, there is a food and beverage service in the parking lot of the Archaeological Park, run by a private company.
- In the same place there is a shop for gifts or souvenirs offered by the museum guide.

Including additional commercial services at your site to increase revenues:

- It is planned to organize a festival of ritual bread, together with local cultural clubs from the villages in the region. The festival is organized by the ethnographers of the museum, and the theme is placed on ancient ritual foods that have been preserved since medieval times.
- in the medieval city we will organize concerts - jazz, classical music, with the help of non-governmental organizations and companies that will donate funds to performers. As before, the concerts will be held outdoors in the castle of the ruler.
- Exhibitions about the site will be organized in the Historical Museum in Rousse, which will present the latest research on the site.
- All donations received will be invested in the maintenance and construction of the archeological park.

4.7. Communication, branding and promotion

Objectives, themes and visitor analysis of communicative planning:

We believe that communication and promotion will bring greater visibility to our site. at the moment the site is not very well known and although it is impressive, it does not have a built face, it does not have its own brand.

The general public of the site are family tourists who can use the place for walks, rest, entertainment. The need to communicate with them stems from the desire to present a unique place that combines history and nature, which includes many messages about the daily way of life of the past, not just patriotic appeals and historical facts. For this purpose, the channels of social networks will be used to reach different audiences, and the main operators of messages will be the PR specialists of the Rousse Museum.

Identify the purpose of your communication:

The aim of the communication is to make the site better known among the local communities, but also to educate the public about the cultural heritage. After achieving these goals, I plan to expand our audience by involving supporters, stakeholders, and the general public in action for your cause, so that the attitude of local authorities to the archeological park can change.

Identify your audience:

We try to increase family visitors, external and local. The main visitors of the site come from the nearby 150 km around the site, from Northern Bulgaria. Some of them are organized groups of over 200 km, and very few are from passenger ships on the Danube. The group visitors are adults, mostly retirees. Individual visitors - families, are active, hard-working people who have the means - arrive by car and have time. Visits last up to two hours. For all the entrance fee is not high - 2.5 euros, which means that it can be increased to 3 euros, which is the average value for visiting sites in this part of the world. At the moment, visitors do not leave much money at the site, as the supply is small.

The site is visited as part of leisure activities, as one of the local attractions. It is difficult to trace the attractiveness of the site in all seasons, as in August the temperatures on the plateau, where the fortress is, reach plus 40 degrees Celsius.

The site meets their expectations, and the proposed interpretations are assessed as insufficient - visitors want more - more knowledge, details that contribute to understanding the world of the Middle Ages.

The strongest memories are associated with the Watchtower, which is a symbol of the fortress. The site has other significant elements from the past that have potential for development.

Plan and design your message:

For the clear purposes of our message, we first want the staff to be aware of the main benefits of the archeological park so that they can present them to visitors. In this way, visitors will be able to feel the difference of this place from the other many archeological sites, as here it will not be necessary to study dates, events and facts. We expect the audience to share their experiences from the site with relatives and acquaintances, thus a first-person presentation. At the same time, it relies on social media to broadcast messages, images, landscapes that become more visible and linked to the archeological park. The PR department of the Rousse Museum will be responsible for this activity.

Consider your resources:

For the implementation of the communication activities, we envisage the use of the resources of the Rousse Museum. When creating certain events, it is possible to make paid advertising to increase access to audiences on social networks.

Plan for obstacles and emergencies:

We are in a situation of inflation and economic destabilization as a result of Russia's war against Ukraine. This could cut short a number of initiatives on the archeological park. At the same time, in a post-Covid situation we have the opportunity to look for new audiences on social networks.

Monitor and evaluate your communication strategies:

In the course of daily work, the audience will be exposed to the messages and activities, according to the plan. Audience reactions will be expected to put together a consistent sequence of actions to achieve the desired effects. Undoubtedly, there are components of communication strategy components that do not reach our target audiences, so we will look for other options to achieve them.

4.8. Networking and integration with other local and regional archaeological / cultural attractions

Networking:

For the successful creation of a network of partners of the Archaeological Park we will initiate meetings with managers of archaeological sites located in an area of 100 km around. Through this initiative, greater visibility of the sites will be achieved, whereby the visitors of one site will learn about the others through specially placed information boards. At the same time, the networking will highlight each of the sites with its characteristics, which is in support of the creation of Archaeological Parks in our country. The partners will benefit from networking, as they will gain our experience from working on an archeological park, and will clarify the specifics of the places, according to each other.

Connecting cultural attractions into cultural tours:

At present, it is too early to think about cultural routes in the region, as individual sites, even networked ones, are in a position of competition rather than fruitful cooperation. The construction of the route needs the support of local communities and stakeholders, not just a group of sites. Thematically, outdoor objects or objects representing late Antiquity and the Middle Ages can be combined. In this way, not only the topics of the presentation can be expanded, but also the audiences with different interests.

The realization of such a route requires efforts for high visibility, which is present in restaurants, accommodation, shops. Interpretive media - panels are needed to make the connection between the individual objects. Signs for the distance between the objects along the route are also needed.

4.9. Cooperation with tourism industry

Linking your archaeological site with tourism:

The focus of the tourist strategy in Rousse - the regional center, is not focused on open-air archeological sites, as they fall in other municipalities. The emphasis in this strategy does not include events that are directly related to the needs of the site. Although Ruse has an archeological site - a Roman fortress, the city does not rely on archeology to present its tourist potential.

Tourist-active participants do not know the archeological sites and do not present them, some tour operators have contracts to visit the site. Cooperation can be improved, but it takes time and common goals.

Know your visitors

We have been monitoring our visitors for the last 15 years and we have their profile changing over time. Offering different services to them is not very different, as there are not enough resources and people for this activity. Unfortunately, no research has been conducted over the years on the expectations of visitors, but such are needed in view of the needs of knowing the audience.



Know your economic and social benefits and challenges from tourism

The benefits of connecting our site with the tourist services of your city can be great for both parties, if they realize their importance. Both sides can profit from their interactions.

Increasing the number of tourists will create problems with parking. It is imperative to think about alternative transport - bicycles. Most visitors will have a bigger impression on the site and, accordingly, more resources for its maintenance.

When organizing festivals on the site, local communities can be involved in the activities, thus sharing responsibilities. In this way, the association with the local cultural heritage will be facilitated, which will contribute to the establishment of the local Archaeological Park.

4.10. Research activities

Plan necessary additional research: OK

Archaeological research in the area of Church 16 is important for the study of the western part of the city, which is an important element of fortification, communication and daily life. Rouse Regional Museum of History will conduct the study in the next five years.

There is also a need to study theories about the origin of the name "Cherven". Rouse Regional Museum of History will commission the study of linguists and ethnologists to outline the origin and content of the name.

Both types of research represent an important moment in the process of communicating with local communities. Presenting the results of the research are important moments in this process.

5. IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE

5.1. Activity planning and execution of the required works

Implementation period 1 (2022)						
ID	Activity	Responsibilities	Estimated costs	Source of funding	Planned time of implementation	Implementation check
1.1	On the archaeological site we will set up fourteen interpretive panels. The maintenance of the panels will be minimal and included in the regular maintenance costs of the site.	An external contractor will design, produce and set up the panels.	5000 EUR	EU project funding (e. g. Archeo-Danube project)	May 2022	Yes: for the same budget 3 smaller interpretative panels have been set up in October 2022
		An external contractor, i.e. interpretation expert will develop the content of the panels	1000 EUR			
1.2	Photovoltaic lamps will be installed on the north side of the fortress, which will illuminate the walls attractively.	An external contractor will supply and install the lamps	5000 EUR	Sponsorship offered by local citizens	October 2022	Yes: the budget is a donation
Implementation period 2 (2023)						
2.1	Thematic workshops for children "The World of the Middle Ages": 1 hour / week for the whole year	Museum pedagogues will conduct activities, according to the program "Rousse knowledge"	2000 EUR	Museum financing	January-December 2023	Yes: 200 total participants aged 10-14 years

5.2. Operation, maintenance and improvement activities

5.2.1. Operational structure of the archaeological park

1. Administration					
ID	Service	Tasks	Objectives	Budget	Revenue
1.1	Finances				
1.2	Human resources				
1.3	Maintenance				
1.4	Security				
1.5	Visitor reception				
1.6	Communications				
				
2. Conservation and presentation					
2.1	Conservation				
2.2	Presentation				
2.3	Research				
				
3. Additional services					
3.1	Catering				
3.2	Accommodation				
3.3	Shops				
3.4	Parking				
3.5	Events organization				
				

5.2.2. Maintenance planning

1. Equipment, installations and furniture				
ID	Activity	Responsibilities	Planned time of implementation	Implementation check
1.1	Lighting equipment maintenance	Internal technical service	Monthly	
1.2				
1.3				
			
2. Landscaping				
2.1	Mowing	Internal landscaping service	Every two weeks / high season; Monthly / low season	
2.2	Tree and shrub pruning	Internal landscaping service	Spring	
			
3. Sanitation				
3.1	Waste collection	Internal sanitation service	Daily	
3.2	Waste removal	External service provider	Daily	
3.3	Restroom cleaning	Internal sanitation service	Twice per day	
			

5.3. Monitoring process and periodical evaluation

5.3.1. Monitoring

Objective	Indicator	Method and responsible person for collecting and analysing data	Time period	Implemented
Presentation and interpretation at the site	The satisfaction of visitors	Questionnaire at the exit done by the museum.	Every 2 years	✓
	Increased appreciation of the values of the site	Questionnaire at the exit done by the museum.	Every 2 years	✓
Conservation at the site	Condition of the displayed archaeological remains at the site	Observation done by the museum.	Every 2 years	✓
Tourism at the site	Visitor numbers, number of foreign tourists	Counting done at the entrance by the operator.	Every year	
	Tourist benefits for local accommodations providers	Report from the local tourist office and accommodation agencies.	Every 2 years	

5.3.2. Evaluation

Activity	Evaluation method	Responsible person	Time period	Implemented
Interpretive panels at the site	Interviews with visitors at the site.	Operator of the site	Every 3 months	✓
Archaeological tour through the city	Interviews with the participants of the tour	Tour guides	Every 6 months	✓

5.4. Staff (and volunteers) recruiting and training

Organize staff and volunteers

We plan to hire seasonal workers to maintain the place - railings, steps, mowing, fountains.

Volunteers in our country are not part of people's free time practices, which is why we do not plan activities with volunteers.