



# Uncovering The River Aarhus 1992-2015

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Cultural routes III: Inspiring policy change.  
Interreg Europe, Policy Learning Platform, November 3, 2022

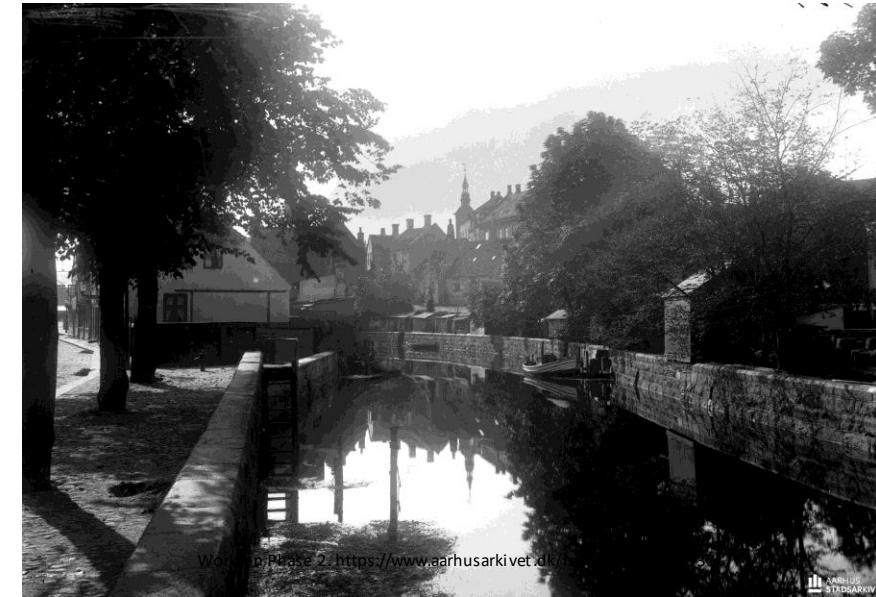
Soren Bitsch Christensen, Director, Aarhus City Archives, DK

- Parts of The River Aarhus were covered between 1933-1957 (put into a large 'channeled pipe').
- Due to infrastructural changes – access road to the harbour.
- Sanitary reasons (smell, dirty water)
- Paved the way for automobiles and other means of transportation to gain ground.
- Large-scale infrastructural changes with modern concrete bridges were constructed.



Ref: Krak.dk (1954 map)

1954



The River Aarhus, ca. 1908-1912. Ref: <https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000186251>



# Before and after



Before the uncovering of The River Aarhus, ca. 1930s: <https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000319665>



After covering up parts of The River Aarhus, ca. 1939: <https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000319666>

# Political agreement

- In 1989 the City Council of Aarhus principally decided to reopen the area that had been covered up half a century earlier.
- The local plan that dealt with the reopening was finally approved in 1992.
- Completed between 1996 and 2015.



First stage. Uncovering The River Aarhus. 1995.  
<https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000381402>



Work on Phase 2. <https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000161335>



Advertisement on the district development plan (local plan in Danish) on The Uncovering of The River Aarhus. Aarhus Stiftstidende, 17-03-1992.



# What does the uncovered river provide?

- Recreational spaces for pedestrians and city-life.
- A “green and blue” line through the city centre.
- Modern aesthetics (bridges, railings, seats, pavement, lights etc.)
- Modern solutions for water-management (reservoirs for sewage and surplus water, connected to ‘remodelled’ lakes).
- In the last phase of the Uncovering near the Mouth of the River, a sluice mechanism that regulates water levels was installed in order to prevent flooding in areas along the canal as a result of climate changes. The system has a capacity of 18 m<sup>3</sup>/s and is therefore able to pump away 18.000 liters of water per second.

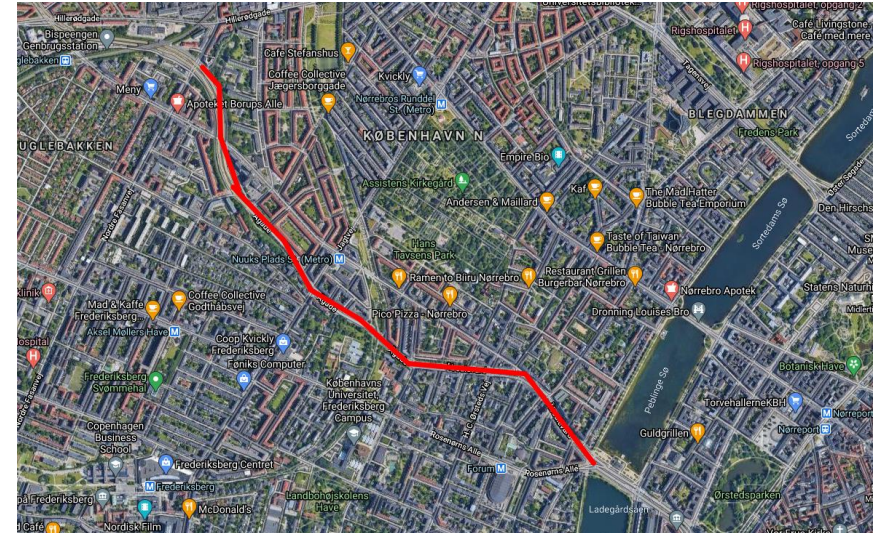


People hanging out at “The Spanish Steps”. 2005. <https://www.aarhusarkivet.dk/records/000254653>

# Potential transfer of Good Practice

## National level:

- Ladegaardsåen in Copenhagen.
  - Talks of uncovering Ladegaardsåen.
- <https://www.ladegaardsaaen.dk/> - activist website for the uncovering.
- *“Copenhagen faces many environmental problems; the most compelling are a lack of green space and recent extreme rainfall causing flooding. This project aimed to address these problems by (1) investigating the possibility of daylighting Ladegårdsåen, a piped canal that is located under the busiest road in Copenhagen, the Ågade-Åboulevard (AA), and (2) developing a feasible design concept that our sponsor, Miljøpunkt Nørrebro, and other stakeholders might pursue further.”*



# WaVE film - The River Aarhus



**The River Aarhus – WaVE**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDBvl6W09bU>

**Bonus video – Aarhus Vand**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnWzHkm2THc>



## Further info on The River Aarhus



- AarhusVand: <https://www.aarhusvand.dk/en/international/solutions/the-aarhus-river-project--improved-water-quality-and-flood-prevention-in-one/>
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