Press invitation: Official opening of KAI Water Culture House on Paper Island, 5 December 2026

Copenhagen's new water culture house, KAI, opens on Saturday, 5 December. The official opening ceremony will take place from 10:00 to 10:30, followed by an open house for all Copenhageners from 12:00 to 18:00. HM The King will conduct the official opening. Members of the press are invited to attend.

Beyond 300,000 handcrafted bricks and 403 windows, an extraordinary bathing experience awaits.

KAI is a spectacular water culture house featuring pools on several levels, wellness facilities, harbour bathing and a cultural centre. Designed by the world-renowned Japanese architectural firm Kengo Kuma & Associates, KAI has been built with support from Nordea-fonden.

KAI is a new meeting place on Copenhagen's waterfront for Copenhageners, swimming clubs, cultural audiences and visitors to the city. A water culture house with an exclusive design, yet inclusive in its purpose.

For further information about the water culture house, visit www.kai.kk.dk.

Press accreditation

Press accreditation is required. **Members of the press wishing to attend the official opening must register by Wednesday, 2 December 2026, by emailing presse.okf@kk.dk**

Please write "Press accreditation for KAI" in the subject line.

There will be a designated outdoor press area for arrivals and an indoor press area for the official opening ceremony. Space in the indoor press area is limited.

Accredited press should arrive at 09:00 at press area 1 outside KAI, using the entrance on the harbour side. Please bring a valid press card.

For further information, please contact Senior Adviser Anette Amalie Juhl Lindschouw at ig9q@kk.dk or +45 26 13 65 49.

Press contacts

Lord Mayor of Copenhagen Sisse Marie Welling, via the press phone on +45 24 91 51 58.

Mayor for Culture, Leisure and Citizen Services Christopher Røhl, via the press phone on +45 23 27 44 70.

For further information, please contact the City of Copenhagen's Finance Administration at presse.okf@kk.dk or via the press phone on +45 21 25 15 24.

Programme for the official opening, 10:00–10:30

Times	Activities
09:00	Accredited press arrives at the entrance on the harbour side and proceeds to press area 1. Please bring a valid press card.
09:15	Press briefing
10:00	HM The King arrives at KAI.

10:02	The lifeguard and master of ceremonies welcomes guests and introduces the speakers.
10:03	Speech by Lord Mayor of Copenhagen, Sisse Marie Welling.
10:06	Speech by Mayor for Culture, Leisure and Citizen Services Christopher Røhl.
10:09	Speech by Yuki Ikeguchi, Lead Architect at Kengo Kuma & Associates.
10:12	Speech by Jens Bjørn Andersen, Chair of the Board of Nordea-fonden.
10:15	**OFFICIAL OPENING – RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY** HM The King, the Lord Mayor and the Mayor for Culture, Leisure and Citizen Services cut a lane rope to officially open KAI.
10:18	The BARK choir gives the world premiere of *Havet Spejler Himlen* (The Sea Reflects the Sky), composed especially for the opening of KAI.
10:24	Young swimmers from Hovedstadens Svømmeklub perform a specially choreographed artistic swimming routine in the 25-metre pool.
10:27	The lifeguard and master of ceremonies concludes the official programme and invites guests to a reception and KAI cake in the foyer.
10:30-10:45	**PRESS SLOT – opportunity to interview the speakers at press Area 2**

Water and cultural programme during KAI's open house, 12:00–18:00

Activities inside KAI

- All pools are open – remember to bring swimwear and a towel! Visit www.kai.kk.dk for further information about the open house.
- Documentary about the making of KAI.
- Eelgrass workshop and Ålegræsånden.
- Materials exhibition – see and feel the materials used in the building.
- Experience the architecture and beautiful views from KAI's tallest brick tower.

Outdoor activities in front of KAI

- 12:00–13:00: The Royal Danish Navy Band kicks off the celebrations.

- 11:00–16:00: Interactive theatre by performance art collective Nøgensnegle.
- 12:00–16:00: Ålegræsånden will make appearances throughout the day.
- 12:00–18:00: Exhibition about the construction and development of KAI.
- 12:00–18:00: Podwalk by Copenhagen Visitor Service.

Please note: Press accreditation is not required for the open house from 12:00 to 18:00.

Members of the press will not have access to the pools, and photography from within the pools is not permitted.

FACTS ABOUT KAI

- Vandkulturhuset Papirøen is the project developer. The project is being realised in partnership with the City of Copenhagen and with financial support from the Nordea-fonden.
- In spring 2017, the City of Copenhagen launched an international architectural competition, which was won by the Japanese practice Kengo Kuma & Associates. The project was developed in collaboration with Cornelius Vöge Atelier for Architecture through the concept design stage, with Vilhelm Lauritzen Architects acting as executive architects from detailed design through to completion.
- KAI has been built at a cost of DKK 989 million. The City of Copenhagen contributed DKK 443 million, while the Nordea-fonden provided DKK 546 million, making it possible to create a truly exceptional venue. The support has made it possible to install a vertical ground-source heat pump system. The system consists of ten boreholes drilled to a depth of 250 metres and provides year-round heating for the outdoor pools on the first floor.
- Admission prices at KAI will be aligned with those of the City of Copenhagen's other swimming pools and water culture houses. However, KAI will offer extended opening hours from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm, seven days a week.
- The total capacity of the facility is 380 bathers.

Water Facilities

- KAI contains 10 pools, in addition to a bathing and dipping zone in the harbour.
- The 10 pools contain a total of 1 million litres of water. By comparison, a 50-metre swimming pool contains approximately 2 million litres.

Ground Floor Pools

- Fitness Pool (27°C)
- Teaching Pool (29°C)
- Three Children's Play Pools (32°C)

Wellness Pools (First Floor)

- Therapy Pool (36°C)
- Hot Pool (42°C)
- Cold Plunge Pool (15°C)

Outdoor Pools (First Floor)

- Valley Pool, with views of the sky (26°C)
- Onsen, with views of the sky and Copenhagen Harbour (36°C)

KAI provides direct access to harbour swimming facilities for visitors:

- Swimming Zone (12 x 50 metres) overlooking the Opera Park
- Plunge Zone (6 x 22 metres) in front of KAI with views of the Royal Danish Playhouse
- The timber waterfront deck and public harbour bath will remain open to the public year-round, 24 hours a day. The outdoor harbour bathing facilities will not be fully completed by 5 December 2026 and are expected to open in early 2027.

For more information about pool lengths, depths and water temperatures, visit www.kai.kk.dk.

Architecture

- KAI consists of five brick towers floating above a light glass structure.
- Each tower is shaped according to the outline of the pools beneath it.
- The building contains 300,000 handmade bricks.
- There are 403 windows, designed as openings that frame views and bring natural daylight into the building.
- The facility includes 10 pools, three saunas, a heated stone and a steam bath.
- Between the tops of the brick towers sits the iconic Valley Pool, an outdoor pool positioned at the highest point of the building.

Culture

- When KAI opens, it will offer an ongoing programme of arts and cultural activities centred around the theme of water. Follow the cultural programme at www.kai.kk.dk.
- The tallest brick tower contains spaces for cultural and physical activities, as well as rooms available for hire.
- On the third floor is Horisonten – a cultural space with capacity for 75 people.
- On the second floor is Blikket – a space for physical and cultural activities with capacity for 75 people.
- On the first floor is Vandkanten – a wet activity space with capacity for 22 people.
- On the mezzanine is Udsigten, a meeting room with capacity for 12 people.

Construction Team

- Client: Paper Island Water Culture House Foundation
- Contributors: City of Copenhagen and Nordea-fonden
- Client Adviser: COWI A/S
- Main Contractor: MT Højgaard A/S

- Lead Architect: Kengo Kuma & Associates
- Consultants: Vilhelm Lauritzen Architects, Søren Jensen Consulting Engineers, KI Consulting Engineers, COWI Building East, Rambøll (water treatment), Jesper Kongshaug (lighting design), and Cornelius Vöge Atelier for Architecture (up to and including the outline proposal)