

The Vikings

Key Facts

Who were the Vikings?

- Vikings were largely from Denmark, Norway and Sweden.
- The Viking period began with the raiding of Lindisfarne in **793AD**
- The Vikings used longboats, which were very fast, for their swift attacks.

The Viking invasion of Britain

- The Viking army landed first in East Anglia and then moved North.
- Within a century, Vikings had taken over large parts of the land in northern England, although failed to over-rule the large kingdom of Wessex.
- York was the main Viking city, with up to 15,000 inhabitants.
- The Viking army was known as the Great Heathen

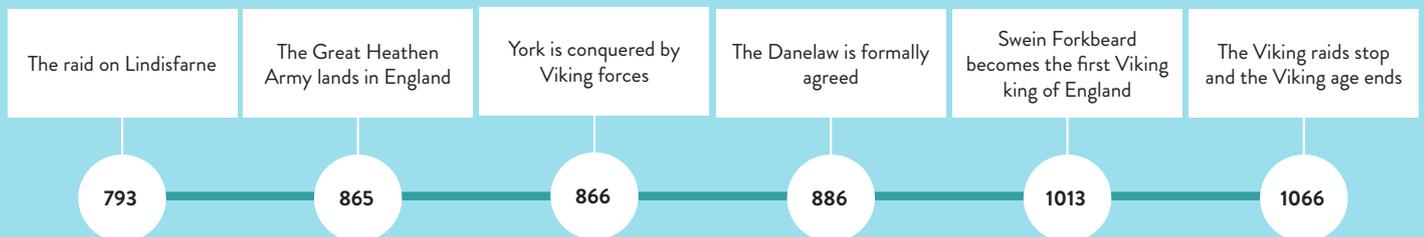
Army and was led by King Guthrum.

- In **878AD** King Alfred defeated King Guthrum at the Battle of Eddington, possibly burning some cakes.
- Following this battle, a treaty was agreed that left Vikings ruling over 'Danelaw' in the north of England and King Alfred ruling the rest.
- Following the death of Eric Bloodaxe, Saxon kings ruled until 1028AD when King Canute took the crown.

The impact of the Vikings on Britain

- The Vikings were responsible for the world's oldest parliament – the Tynwald – in the Isle of Man.
- The Vikings wrote in runes, an early form of alphabet
- Life in Viking Britain was broadly similar to Saxon Britain: families lived in one room round houses and lived through farming.

Timeline of key events



Historical Skills



- Investigate the Roman withdrawal from Britain, considering the causes and consequences of this (Anglo-Saxon and Viking settlers) (UNCRC - Article 8)
- To consider the causes and consequences of Viking invasions on Britain e.g. changes in place names, village life, art, culture and justice systems in Britain caused by the Viking settlers.

UNCRC = United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Useful Vocabulary: *Alert, ancestor, appropriate, attempt, crafty, create, eager, entire, entrance, essential, focus, frantic, frontier, furious, shallow, sturdy, threat, valiant, venture, destructive, weary, group, guard, strength, surprise.*

Key Vocabulary



- **Invader/s:** a person or a group who attacks and enters into another territory. Territory—an area of land.
- **Settlers:** people who stay in an area and build up a life for themselves there. Pagans - people who hold religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions. In prehistoric times, Pagans often worshipped sun gods. (UNCRC - Article 14) Hoard— gather a collection of items (for example, gold) and hide or store it away.
- **Raid:** a rapid, surprise attack on an enemy or group of people.
- **Longboats:** a large oared boat usually carried by a merchant sailing ship. Conquer/Conquest—to overcome and take control of a place or people by military force.
- **Danelaw:** a part of England (mid and South East) where the Danes ruled.
- **The Great Heathen Army:** The Danish Army.