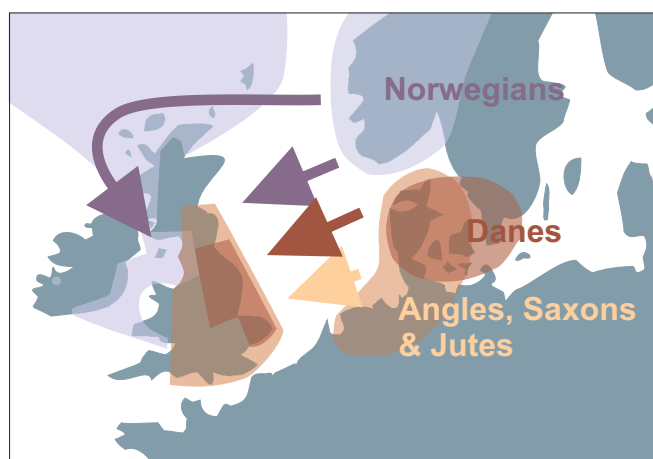


Invasions of the British Isles from Scandinavia

There was not a single invasion of "Vikings", but a series of raids, invasions, conquests and settlements. The later people were mainly from Norway and Denmark (which included southern Sweden). Sometimes they came direct from their homelands and sometimes from their new lands within the British Isles; previously established areas were re-invaded. By the end of the Scandinavian era there was a complex pattern of ethnic groups in which the terms *Norwegian*, *Dane* and *Anglo-Saxon* had become relative.

The map shows a very simplistic version of the invasions and main areas of settlement. It does not include areas of influence, tribute and raiding, political control or the extent of the original inhabitants (Britons, Irish, Scots and Picts).



Angles, Saxons and Jutes invaded around 450 AD following the departure of the Romans. They established seven kingdoms. The Britons were either absorbed or displaced to Wales, Scotland, Cornwall and Brittany.

Danes pillaged the coast from the late 700s. Later they settled. Danelaw was established over a large part of England north of a line from Chester to London. The Danes established their Five Boroughs at Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, Stamford and Leicester. York was also a major centre. Political control of Danelaw was fluid - switching between local rulers and Anglo-Saxon kings seeking a unified country.

Further Danish invasions led to Sven Forkbeard securing the whole of England in 1013. His son, Cnut re-conquered it and was crowned King in 1016. Danish control continued until 1042.

England returned to Anglo-Saxon rule and a Norwegian attempt to seize the country in 1066 was defeated by Harold II. Nineteen days later Harold was defeated by the Normans - themselves partly descended from Danish Vikings. Danish attacks continued until 1075 in support of English rebels and Danish claims to the crown.

Norwegians settled the Orkneys, the Shetlands, the Faeroes, the Hebrides, Cumbria and parts of mainland Scotland, Wales and Ireland. There was a large migration of Irish Norwegians to Scotland and Cumbria around 900 AD and several attempts were made to link the possessions around Dublin with the later

Norwegian raids continued to at least 1153 with local raids from the Scottish islands until the thirteenth century. It took until the fifteenth century for all the Scottish islands to come under the Kingdom of Scotland. The invasions of Ireland were less extensive and less long-lasting.

Other invasions from Scandinavia secured the Faeroes, Iceland, Greenland, Normandy, Rus (Novgorod / Kiev) and areas around the Baltic and White Seas. There were attacks in the

The Scandinavians invaded and settled large areas of Europe and beyond, but, apart from the previously uninhabited islands of Iceland, Greenland and the Faeroes, they were quickly absorbed by the local populations. In England and Rus it took 150 years. In Normandy it was even quicker.