

## Viking Britain

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**Start date** 18 March 2016 **End date** 20 March 2016

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge

**Tutor** Thomas Williams **Course code** 1516NRX059

**Director of Programmes** Emma Jennings

**For further information on this course, please contact** Public Programme Co-ordinator, Clare Kerr  
[clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 746237

**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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### Tutor biography

Thomas Williams was the Project Curator of the major international British Museum exhibition *Vikings: Life and Legend* in 2014. He completed his PhD at University College London with a research project that focused on the interdisciplinary study of early medieval warfare. He is also interested in the post-medieval reception of the medieval past, and warrior ideologies in the early and later Middle Ages in Britain, Scandinavia, Russia and the Eastern Baltic. He has written and edited a number of articles and collections dealing with aspects of early medieval history, archaeology, literature and place-names, including the 2015 volume *Representing Beasts in Early Medieval England and Scandinavia* (Boydell and Brewer). He is currently writing a new history of the Vikings in Britain.

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## Course programme

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### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

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| 19:00         | Dinner                                   |
| 20:30 – 22:00 | <i>Vikings? Who, when and why...</i>     |
| 22:00         | Terrace bar open for informal discussion |

### Saturday

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 07:30         | Breakfast  |
| 09:00 – 10:30 | <i>Evidence for the Viking Age in Britain</i>                              |
| 10:30         | Coffee   |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | <i>Warfare: Raiders, conquerors and Vikings at war</i>                     |
| 13:00         | Lunch  |
| 14:00 – 16:00 | Free   |
| 16:00         | Tea  |
| 16:30 – 18:00 | <i>Economy: Towns, trade, coins and industry</i>                           |
| 18:00 – 18:30 | Free   |
| 18:30         | Dinner   |
| 20:00 – 21:30 | <i>Religion: From paganism to Christianity and the Viking way of death</i> |
| 21:30         | Terrace bar open for informal discussion                                   |

### Sunday

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 07:30         | Breakfast  |
| 09:00 – 10:30 | <i>Power: Administration, justice and kingship</i>         |
| 10:30         | Coffee   |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | <i>Legacy: the end of the Viking Age and its influence</i> |
| 12:45         | Lunch  |

**The course will disperse after lunch**

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## Course syllabus

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### Aims:

By the end of the course, it is hoped that students will have:

- Gained an understanding of the range of evidence available for understanding the Viking Age in Britain, and the ways in which it can be appropriately used and interpreted.
- Gained a chronological overview of the progress of Viking raiding, conquest and settlement in Britain between c.800 and 1100.
- Gained a detailed insight into some of the ways in which Scandinavian culture shaped, replaced and interacted with existing cultures of early medieval Britain

### Content:

The course will cover the full period of what is traditionally understood to be the Viking Age in Britain (including Wales, Scotland, Man and the Northern Isles), running from the first recorded raids at the end of the eighth century, to the defeat of Harald Hardrada of Norway in 1066 and the dwindling of Viking involvement in Britain in the decades that followed. As well as covering the chronology of the Viking Age and the major historical events associated with it, the course will consider the full range of evidence for the period (historical, archaeological, numismatic, literary, toponymic) and how these different types of evidence can be used in combination to build a more accurate picture of the Viking Age. The course will also examine, drawing extensively on recent research and new archaeological discoveries, a series of key themes for understanding the nature of the Viking impact in Britain, with a particular focus on how the Vikings forged new identities and nations and inspired developments in language, art and social organisation. The course will conclude with a consideration of the end of the Viking Age and its persistent legacy in modern art and culture.

### Presentation of the course:

The course will be taught through a mixture of illustrated lectures and class discussion

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

- Think critically about the nature of Viking identity and culture in Britain
- Be able to recognise key aspects of Viking culture mediated through art, archaeology and language
- Be able to contextualise the British Viking Age in chronological and geographical terms

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## Reading and resources list

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Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

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| Author                          | Title                                     | Publisher and date |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Brink and Price                 | <i>The Viking World</i>                   | 2008               |
| Carol, Harrison and Williams    | <i>The Vikings in Britain and Ireland</i> | 2014               |
| J. Graham-Campbell and C. Batey | <i>Vikings in Scotland</i>                | 1998               |
| P. Griffiths                    | <i>Vikings of the Irish Sea</i>           | 2010               |
| M. Redknap                      | <i>Vikings in Wales</i>                   | 2000               |
| J. D. Richards                  | <i>Viking Age England</i>                 | 2004               |
| A. Wawn                         | <i>The Vikings and the Victorians</i>     | 2000               |
| D. Wilson                       | <i>Vikings in the Isle of Man</i>         | 2008               |
| G. Williams et al.              | <i>Vikings: Life and Legend</i>           | 2014               |

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 08 March 2016