

## Why was William angry about Harold Godwinson being crowned King?

- William of Normandy expected the throne to pass to him, not Harold Godwinson.
- William claimed he was promised the throne by Edward in 1051 during a dispute with the Godwin family.
- William also said that Harold had sworn a sacred (before God) oath of allegiance (loyalty) and so should NOT have taken the throne over him.
- Harold had sworn an oath at Rouen in the Presence of Norman Nobles.
- Harold did not deny making the oath but he said that he only swore loyalty to William personally (not as a potential King of England).
- He argued that he had been forced to swear the oath because he had been ship wrecked and landed in Normandy and was held prisoner and being threatened by William.



## William's preparation for invasion

When King Edward the Confessor died on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1066, Harold Godwinson was crowned King of England the very next day. However the Duke of Normandy expected the throne to pass to him.

- What do I need to know:
- William's preparations for the invasion
  - The strengths of his invasion plan
  - Where he landed.

| Timeline: Events of 1066       |                                                      |                                                        |                        |                                                                                      |                                              |                                    |                           |                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 5-Jan                          | 6-Jan                                                | 8-Sept                                                 | 20-Sept                | 25-Sept                                                                              | 28-Sept                                      | 6-Oct                              | 14-Oct                    |                    |
| King Edward the Confessor dies | King Edward buried and Harold Godwinson crowned king | King Harold has to disband his fleet and southern army | Battle of Fulford Gate | King Harold beats Harold Hardrada's invading forces at the Battle of Stamford Bridge | William, Duke of Normandy, lands at Pevensey | King Harold arrives back in London | King Harold leaves London | Battle of Hastings |

### Key Words:

- Coronation
- Holy War
- Mobilise
- Papal Banner



## William's invasion preparations

### French support

William had conquered the French province of Maine in 1063 and had a good relationship with the previous French king, Henry. Henry's son was 14 in 1066 so was too young to present a threat to Normandy. There was civil war in Anjou, and William was the most powerful man in north-west Europe as he had the most support. William had a secure base around Normandy as he had extended his area of authority over neighbouring provinces, and even as far away as Sicily, before invading England.



▲ A Map showing William's power and the areas that he controlled

### Getting across the channel

The ships and men were gathered together for a long period, but William ensured that they were well fed so they did not suffer. He also moved his fleet from the mouth of the River Dives to the mouth of the River Somme at Valery, halving the journey to England to around 33km (20 miles).



▲ B Map showing the relocation of William's fleet

### Support from God

William sent Lanfranc, a leading member of the Norman church, to Rome, where he persuaded the Pope that the English Church needed reforming and William was the man to do it. This led to the Pope giving a **Papal Banner** to William, which meant William had the Pope's support in what was now a **Holy War**.

### How did William prepare to invade England?

### Military preparations: the fleet

William did not have a navy so he built a large number of flat-bottomed boats that could transport horses. Weapons were produced and 'flat pack' castles were made, so that when the Normans landed, they could put up the temporary castles very quickly.

### Military preparations: the army

Once William had the Papal Banner, he recruited men from all over France – from Aquitaine, Flanders, Central France, Maine and Brittany – and also Sicily. Many men joined because they wanted to be part of a Holy War, but recruits were also promised land and riches. Eventually, around 8000 men were ready to cross the English Channel.

## How prepared were the Normans?

Gonfanon – a battle pennant used for signalling manoeuvres



Shield – kite shaped. to protect left side and leg



Elite skills – years of training to fight on horseback, special manoeuvres

Weapons – lance, also javelin, sword, mace



Saddle, stirrups, spurs – the knights saddles held them tightly in place on their horse so they could use their arms freely

Horse – specially bred to be strong enough to carry an armoured knight and trained for battle. William had to bring his war horses (destriers) across the Channel.

Armour – chain mail, conical helmet with nose piece



### Landing in England!

The wind had been blowing the wrong direction at the River Dives and this led to the relocation of the Norman fleet. William eventually landed at Pevensey on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1066. During the summer months Harold had waited in the south with an army but when William didn't come, many of the English soldiers were allowed to return home. Harold himself had travelled North to face Harold. On arrival William's troops immediately started building wooden castles structures and could defend their landing spot.