

How did the Romans change Britain?

The Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43 transformed the country in ways that can still be felt today. Before the Romans arrived, Celtic tribes lived in scattered farming settlements, building round thatched houses and following spoken traditions rather than a written language.

The Romans introduced a vast network of carefully engineered roads, stretching across the country. Built straight to allow armies to move efficiently, these roads connected newly established towns, which became centres of trade and government.

Roman towns were carefully planned, featuring forums (market and meeting places), bathhouses, temples and underground drainage systems. Many of Britain's modern cities, including London, York, Chester and Bath, grew directly from Roman foundations.

Architecture changed dramatically too. The Romans used stone, brick and concrete, creating structures far more permanent than anything previously seen in Britain. Some remarkable examples, such as Hadrian's Wall in northern England, still stand today.

The Romans also transformed daily life by introducing new vegetables, herbs and farming techniques, as well as a currency system to replace bartering. The Latin language influenced British culture deeply, forming the roots of many English words we still use.

Overall, Roman occupation left Britain with a lasting legacy of engineering, culture and organisation.



Questions

1. In which year did the Romans invade Britain?
2. What is the name given to the people who lived in Britain before the Romans arrived?
3. Name two features of a typical pre-Roman British settlement.
4. Why were Roman roads built in straight lines?
5. What is a "forum" in a Roman town?
6. Name two cities in modern Britain that grew from Roman settlements.
7. What three main materials did the Romans use in their buildings?
8. Name one famous Roman structure that can still be seen in Britain today.
9. What system did the Romans introduce to replace bartering?
10. Why do you think Roman towns being centres of trade and government might have encouraged more people to move into them from the countryside?

