Taming the Complexity
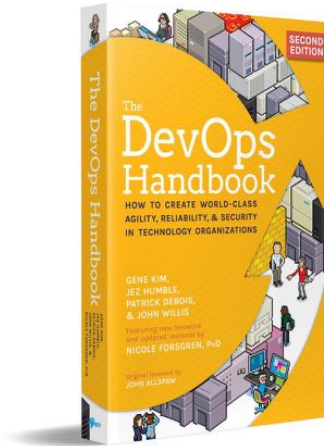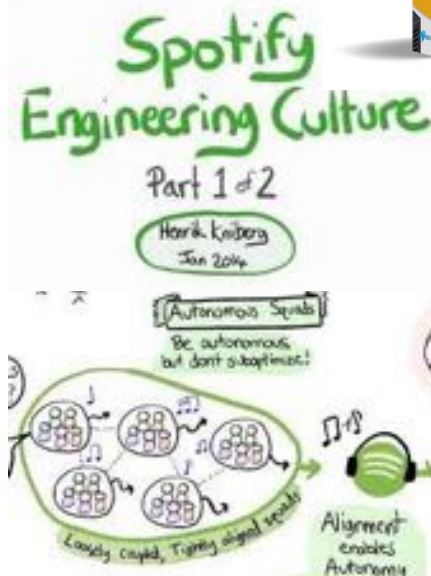
Accelerating value delivery in the constrained and messy world of a typical company

Rob Howse

Leeds Building Society

Great but…   …reality is different

Parts Unlimited   ✗

✗

✗

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- **Mortgages & Savings**
- **800,000 UK customers**
- **£22bn balance sheet**
- **1,500 colleagues**

Putting **home ownership within reach** of more people **generation after generation**

Life in Leeds Building Society in 2019

Symptoms

- **Small change average 6 months**
- **Large change 2 years+**
- **Much change late, over budget or failed**
- **Lots of projects in delivery, not much delivered**

Causes

- **Heavily 'gated' waterfall process**
- **Functionally siloed tech & changes teams**
- **"Nobody says no"**

Departures

Time	Destination	Plt	Due
Continued.........			
11:44	via Birmingham	3	Delayed
11:45	Scarborough	5B	On time
11:46	Newcastle		Cancelled
11:47	Hull	1	On time
11:52	via Manchester Picc	3	Delayed
11:54	via Edinburgh	9	Delayed
11:58	London Kings X	5A	Delayed
12:02	Newcastle		Cancelled

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The Messy Reality

Wide variety of systems, sourcing and work…

…but where's the team? Where's the bench?

c200 applications & system. Mix of Bespoke in-house, bespoke outsourced, SaaS, packaged, on-premise hosted, cloud service, infrastructure
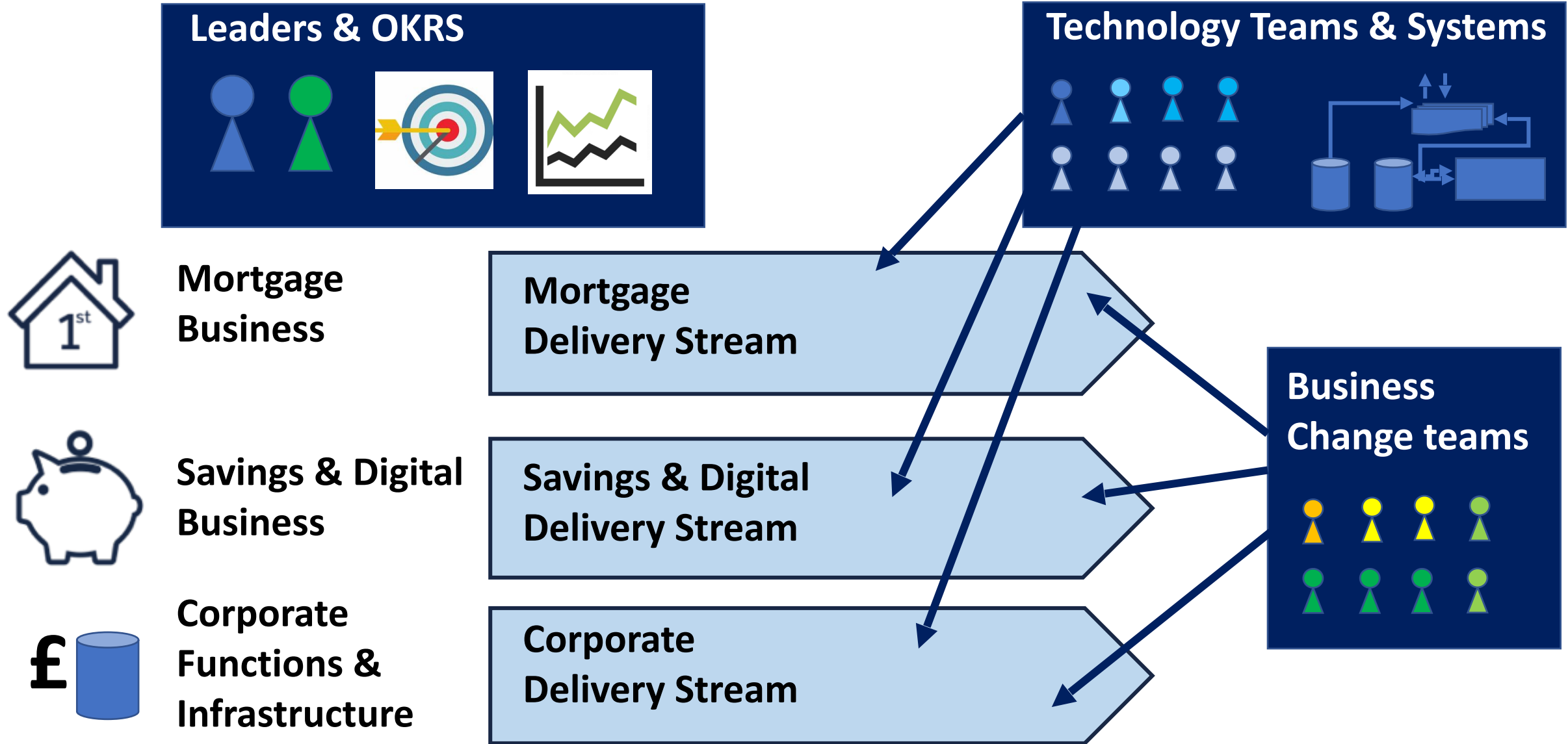
Big initiatives, small initiatives, digital, infrastructure, new build, re-platform, upgrade
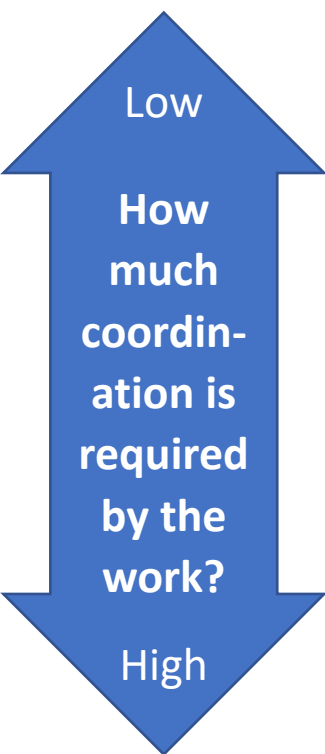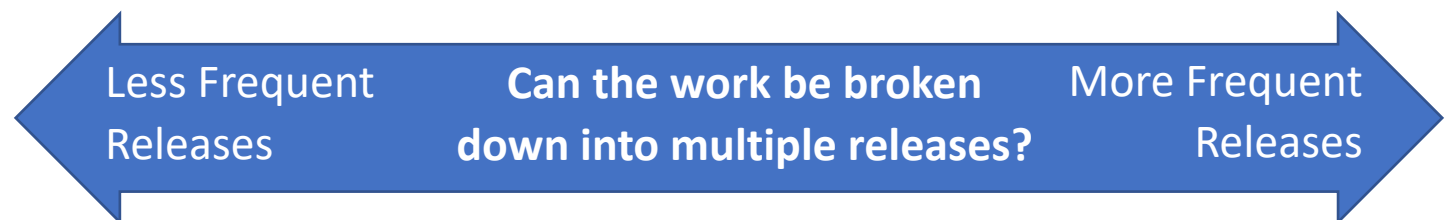
c200 tech/change colleagues = c1 per system

Let the nature of the work drive the delivery method

Agile orientated team

Programme orientated team

← Less Frequent Releases | **Can the work be broken down into multiple releases?** | More Frequent Releases →

How much coordination is required by the work? (Low ↕ High)

	Value release >6 months	Value release at least every 6 months	Value release at least every 2 months
Limited co-ordination required	N/A	**Light-weight project**	**Agile**
Medium co-ordination required	**Heavy-weight programme**	**Light-weight project**	**Agile**
High co-ordination required	**Heavy-weight programme**	**Light-weight project**	N/A

Flow the work through persistent, vendor/platform specific Product Streams

Mortgages Delivery Stream

Mortgages Shaping Team

Product Streams

Internal Development
- Agile Dev. Team
- Agile Dev. Team
- Agile Dev. Team

Mortgage Servicing Platform Team

3rd Party Delivery
- Agile Release Team
- Programme Team

Mortgage Originations Platform Team

Managed Service Provider
- Joint Agile Dev. Team
- Programme Team

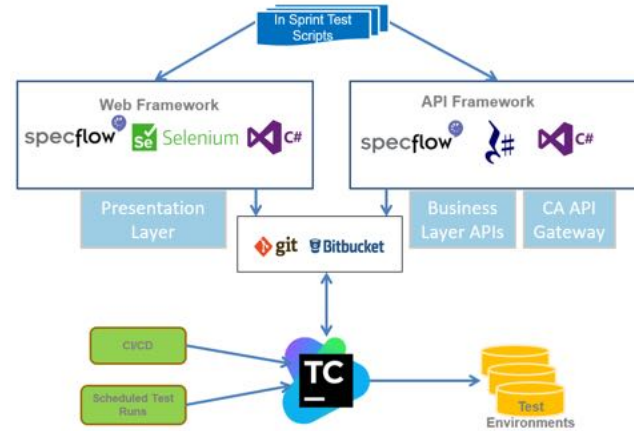**Core Platform Team**

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Shift to incremental delivery

Just do it!

e.g., data centre move done as 178 small incremental moves over 40 weeks rather than 1 or 2 big moves with 40 weeks planning

Invest in automation

e.g., full regression test automation for mortgage origination platform

Decouple the architecture

e.g., Azure, APIs

Outcomes

Area	Release Frequency		Business Outcome Examples
	Was 2019	Now 2022	
Data Centre	A few times a year	4 per week	Resilience improved progressively & no disruption
Digital Savings	2 per year	1 > every 2 weeks	30% reduction in time to onboard new customer
Mortgages	1-2 per year	Up to 1-2 per month	The sub-minute mortgage
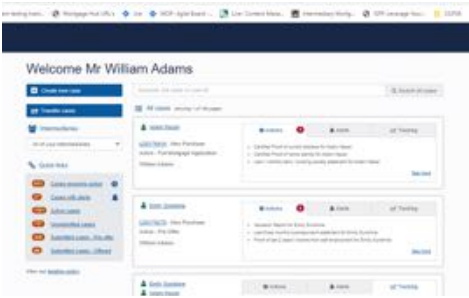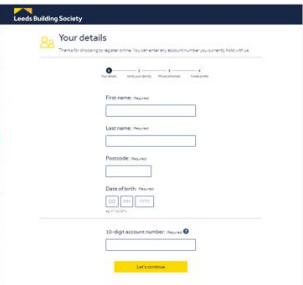
1. **Principles and pragmatism over standard patterns**

2. **Business alignment and end-to-end accountability**

3. **Good OKRs**

4. **Mindset shift is hard...**

5. **...but Covid helped**

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Where next?

- **Ways of working at team level**
- **Capability**
- **Culture**
- **Architecture**

Questions?

- **Ask on the conference Slack channel**
- **Get in touch** http:// linkedin.com/in/rob- howse

Want to join us? We're hiring. Contact **Andrew Ackhurst   leedsbuildingsocietyjobs.co.uk**
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