acasworking for everyone

Find a solution to your workplace dispute – alpha assessment

Sam Clark 10 February 2022



Who are Acas?



Acas is an independent public body that receives funding from the government.

We provide free and impartial advice to employers, employees and their representatives on:

- employment rights
- best practice and policies
- resolving workplace conflict

When things go wrong, we help to resolve workplace disputes between employers and employees.

Find a solution to your workplace dispute



- Where a dispute arises in a workplace between one or more employees and the employer, there may be a right to present a case to an employment tribunal.
- Acas has a legal duty to attempt to help the parties resolve the dispute, and in most cases an employee who wishes to submit a claim to a tribunal is required to contact us initially before doing so.
- Acas conciliators work to take the heat out of the dispute and assist parties in reaching settlement through a process of communication with an emphasis on testing and challenging assumptions to move parties towards resolution.
 - This is called Early Conciliation (EC)

What are the service outcomes?



 120,000 disputes per year come through the service, but the number of people in dispute can be much higher

- 98% of notifications come via digital route
- 70% do not go on to make a claim to the employment tribunal

Of those that do, 75% are resolved before the hearing

Who can use our conciliation service?



- People who work for a company, previously worked there, or may have been refused work there
- Representatives of workers/employees
- Employers
- Representatives of employers.

Who can make a notification to start early conciliation?

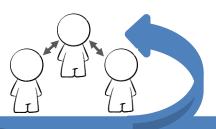
- The process is usually initiated by an employee or worker who is in dispute with their employer
- Our users have a wide range of digital and legal literacy
- Our users may be experiencing significant stress and anxiety when they initiate contact with us.

Solving a workplace dispute





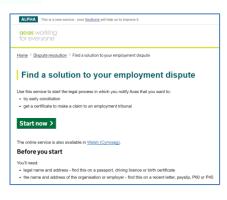
Choose early conciliation and/or get a certificate to go to employment tribunal



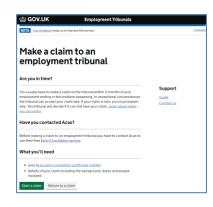


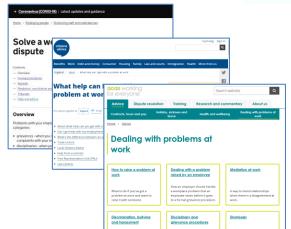
Information gathering

Tell Acas about the dispute



Make a claim to ET







Our journey so far

Our journey so far....



The business problem

Acas has high caseloads and high allocation challenges, and wanted to explore:

- Optimising resolutions
- Alternative allocation model
- Effective use of conciliation time
- Make it easier for users to access our service

Set up delivery - July

- Secured funding from MoJ Shared Outcomes Fund
- Identified workstreams
- Set up a programme leadership team
- Procurements via Digital Outcomes and Specialists
- Secured BEIS and CDDO alpha spend approval

1

2

3

4

Programme discovery

March to April 2021

- Mapped end to end service
- Gathered insight from desk & user research, focusing on both external and internal users
- Explored ODR Solutions
- Comparable services to see what they were doing
- Identified opportunities to do things differently

Programme alpha
October to March

Programme discovery - user research

- Our key aim was to understand the current state of the end-to-end conciliation journey from the perspective of our conciliators, support staff, and customers.
- The user needs and pain points we found could be categorised under three general themes across the journey.
 - 1. Before notification, notification and ECSO
 - 2. Allocation to initial contact
 - 3. Working through to resolution



Primary user research sessions, mapping pain points



User Group	Sprint 1 Understanding the pain points	Sprint 2 Understanding the pain points (cont.)	Sprint 3 Developing concepts and additional validation	Sprint 4
Internal Users (including conciliators, ECSO, CAT, DCT and other support staff from various grades)	In-depth video interviews with 15 internal users: Mix of conciliators and support staff (mix of regions, team-based vs. Individual, and accessibility needs)	Slido sessions with over 230 conciliators and CM's across regions and grades to validate findings in Sprint 1	In-depth video interviews with 6 CMs.	Internal concept testing survey*: 47 responses from a wide range of ACAS staff.
External Users (claimants, respondents, & representatives)		In-depth video interviews with 15 external users: 7 representatives from various unions and legal firms on either claimant or respondent side 6 respondents (HR officers or in-house legal departments) 2 claimants with accessibility needs		External concept testing survey: 14 responses In-depth video interviews with 5 additional external users to test the concepts and probe for more detailed feedback

Programme problem statement



How can we

Offer our users the simplest and most accessible journey to help them resolve their dispute at the earliest point possible

...and ensure that they

Experience a high-quality, value-added service that leads to an appropriate outcome for their situation

...so that

- Our users avoid a long, costly and emotionally draining legal process
- We increase our impact by promoting resolution, reducing the burden on court capacity
- Our conciliators feel they have a better balance of work that targets their expertise where it is most needed
- UK taxpayers get value for money

Programme vision and outcomes



Find a solution to your workplace dispute - overall programme vision

People involved in a workplace dispute have clearer understanding of how they can reach a quicker, more cost effective resolution at the earliest point possible

Overall Outcomes

- Parties spend less time in employment tribunal system
- Fewer cases requiring judicial time (including final determination)
- · Conciliators focused on resolution and not administration
- Parties engage in discussion with conciliators which is focused on resolution

Workstream 1 Content Strategy

VISION

Users grasp basic principles of employment law related to their dispute, the most appropriate way to resolve it, and have clear expectations of where Acas can help

OUTCOMES

- Reduced flow of work into Early Conciliation
- People in Early Conciliation have exhausted informal resolution routes before submitting a claim
- Parties better informed about EC and ET (including benefits of resolution over ET and what they need to do to present case at ET)
- Parties clear on the law that applies to their case
- Users understand if they have a potentially valid claim

Workstream 2 Assisted Notification

VISION

Users are guided to supply information that conciliators need to provide the best possible service at the earliest point.

OUTCOMES

- Reduced flow of work into Early Conciliation
- People in Early Conciliation have exhausted informal resolution routes before submitting a claim
- Parties engage in discussion with conciliators which is focused on resolution
- Most cases go direct from notification to conciliator
- Good quality data collected and used to inform the service.

Workstream 3 Optimised Distribution

VISION

Cases are directed to the most appropriate and available conciliator, to quickly and efficiently resolve their dispute.

OUTCOMES

Most cases go direct from notification to conciliator

Acas has a clearer view of current and potential conciliator resource availability

Case administration expertise focused on maximising efficiency and resolving issues not manual distribution

Workstream 4 Large Group Claims

VISION

Users who belong to the same workplace dispute are quickly brought to the attention of a team with the expertise, tools and resourcing to resolve efficiently.

OUTCOMES

- Parties spend less time in ET system.
- Fewer cases requiring judicial time (including final determination)
- Earlier warning of potential upcoming group claims
- Group cases identified and routed with much less administration to Groups Team

As simple as 1, 2, 3, 4? Overlap between our workstreams





Programme leadership team



Service owner Sam Clark

Programme manager Stewart Gee Programme coordinator
Matt Williams

Digital lead Kate McCaul

DDaT governance lead James Vincent

Delivery leadCurtis Goode

Product leadJess Brown

Technical leadMandeep Dhillon

Policy & comms lead Tony Lowe

Evaluation lead Andrew Sutherland

Finance leadDave Regan

Programme support team

User research lead Ali Rogers Service design lead Dan Da Silveira

Change management Sam Clark Content design
Rob Marshall



Demo

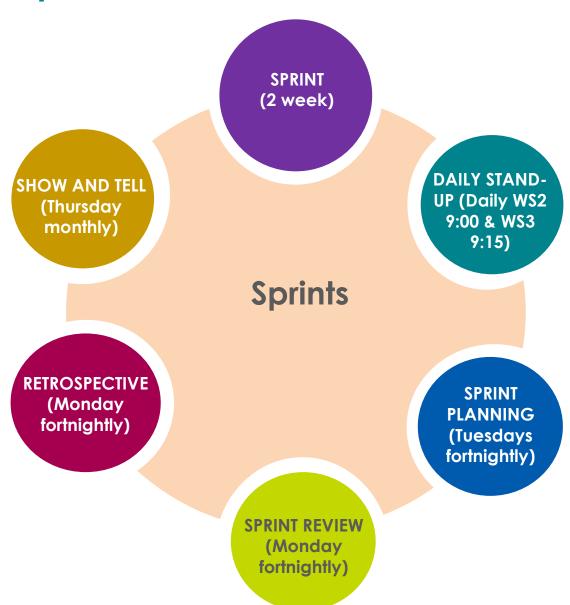
Alpha team





Sprint events





Attendees

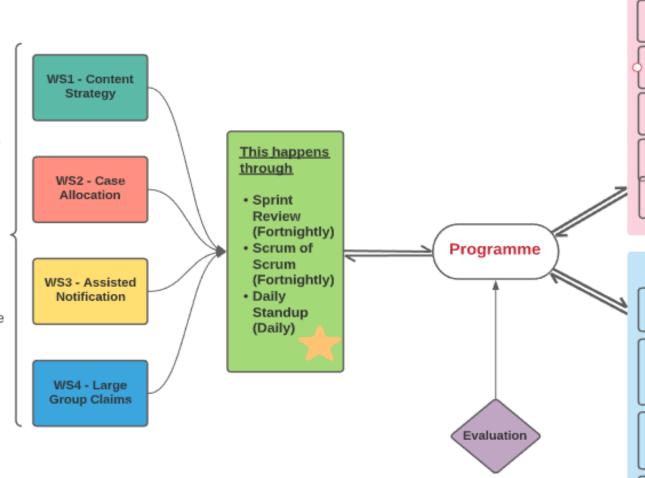
- Daily Stand-up TEAM (and observers)
- Sprint Planning TEAM (and observers)
- Sprint Review KEY STAKEHOLDERS
- Retrospective TEAM
- Show and Tell EVERYONE

Governance

acas

REPORTING

- Risks, assumptions, issues, dependencies (RAID log)
- Urgent blockers
- Progress against key milestones
- RAG rating for workstream
- Forecast spend vs actual
- Timesheets (where relevant)
- Standards compliance (e.g. GDS)
- Resourcing updates



External

Delivery Working Group (Fortnightly)

Evaluation Working Group (Monthly)

External Programme Board (Quaterly)

Employment Tribunal Force (Monthly)

Shared Outcome Fund (Quaterly)

Internal

Head of Functions (Fortnightly)

Planning, Performance & Change Boards (Monthly)

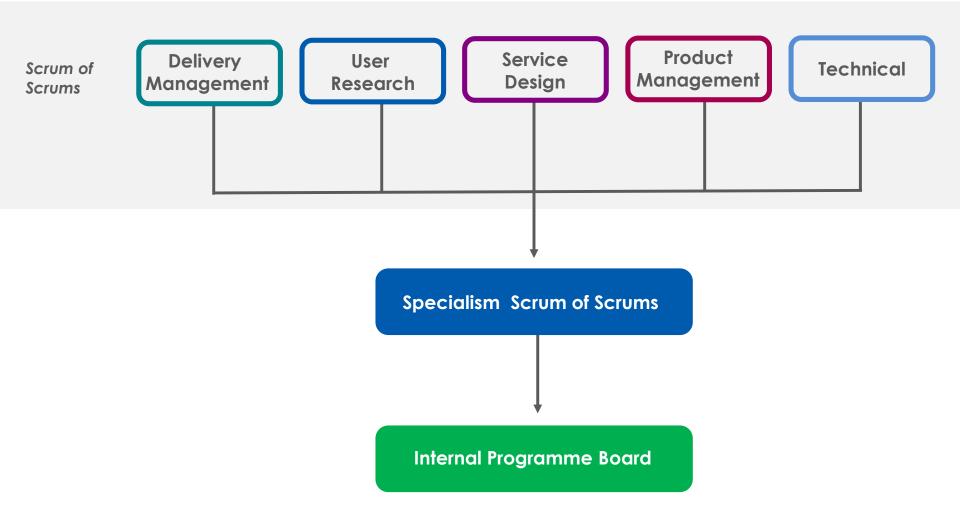
Programme Assurance Group (Fortnightly)

Technology, Design and Delivery Board (Monthly)

Checkpoint Meeting (Fortnightly)

Governance





Communication



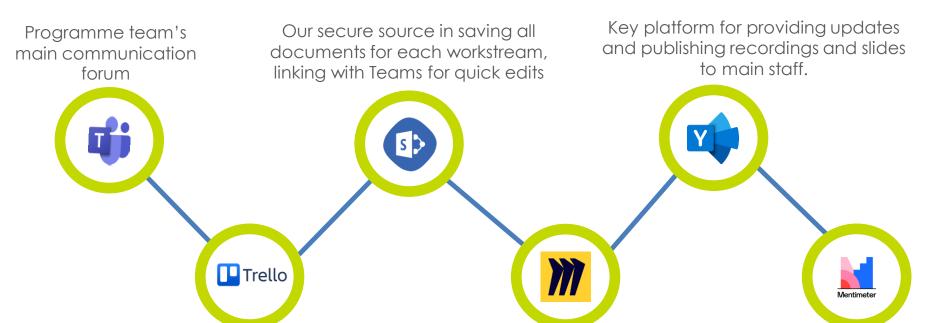


- Monthly Show and Tells
- Written Briefing
- Panel of Experts

providing regular updates means we have transparency throughout, and we can respond to any questions or concerns in a timely and structured way.

Tools





A Tool to manage our tasks and sprint goals.

A Useful links section to locate important documents quickly.

Our principle collaboration tool during workshops also a visual containing charts & Roadmaps etc.

An interactive tool to capture insights through comments and voting mechanisms.

Key performance indicators



Four standard KPIs

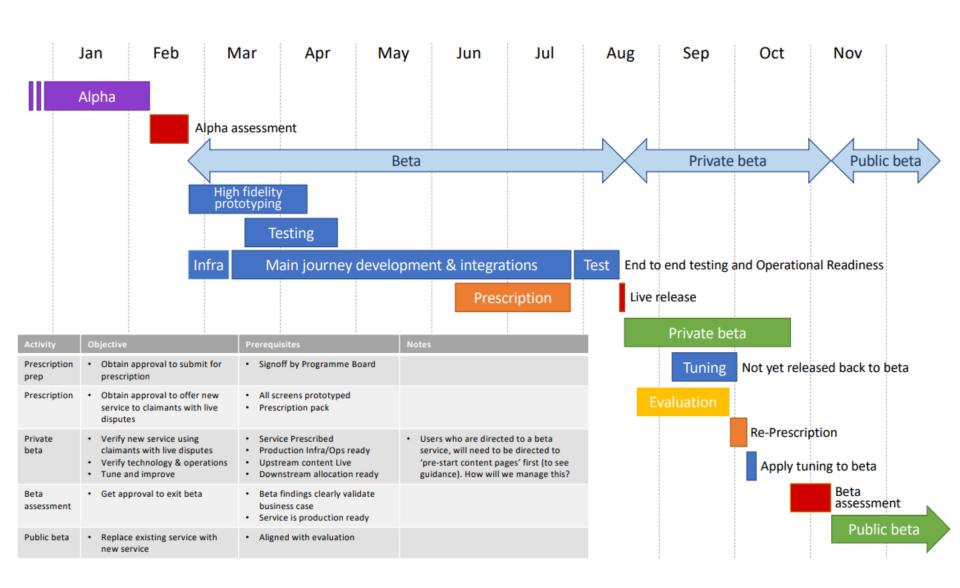
- Digital take up
- Customer satisfaction
- Completion rate
- Cost per transaction

Service specific KPIs

- Fewer inappropriate cases
- Early conciliation take up rates
- Time to allocation
- Reallocation rates
- Resolution rates

Beta plan





Additional roles for beta



- Accessibility/assisted digital lead Ben Evans
- Front-end developer Ben Evans
- Solutions architect Mandeep Dhillon
- Technical architect Dave Stuart
- Back-end developer Amir Razavi
- Back-end developer Szilvia Beky
- Analyst Laurent Hautefeuille
- Integrations specialist Ed Brown
- Quality assurance and testing Marina Bakic
- DevOps specialist Robert Bolfa



Assessment documentation and evidence

https://acas3-alpha.herokuapp.com/

username: acas

password: acas999