

# Find a solution to your workplace dispute – alpha assessment

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# 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.**

- 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?

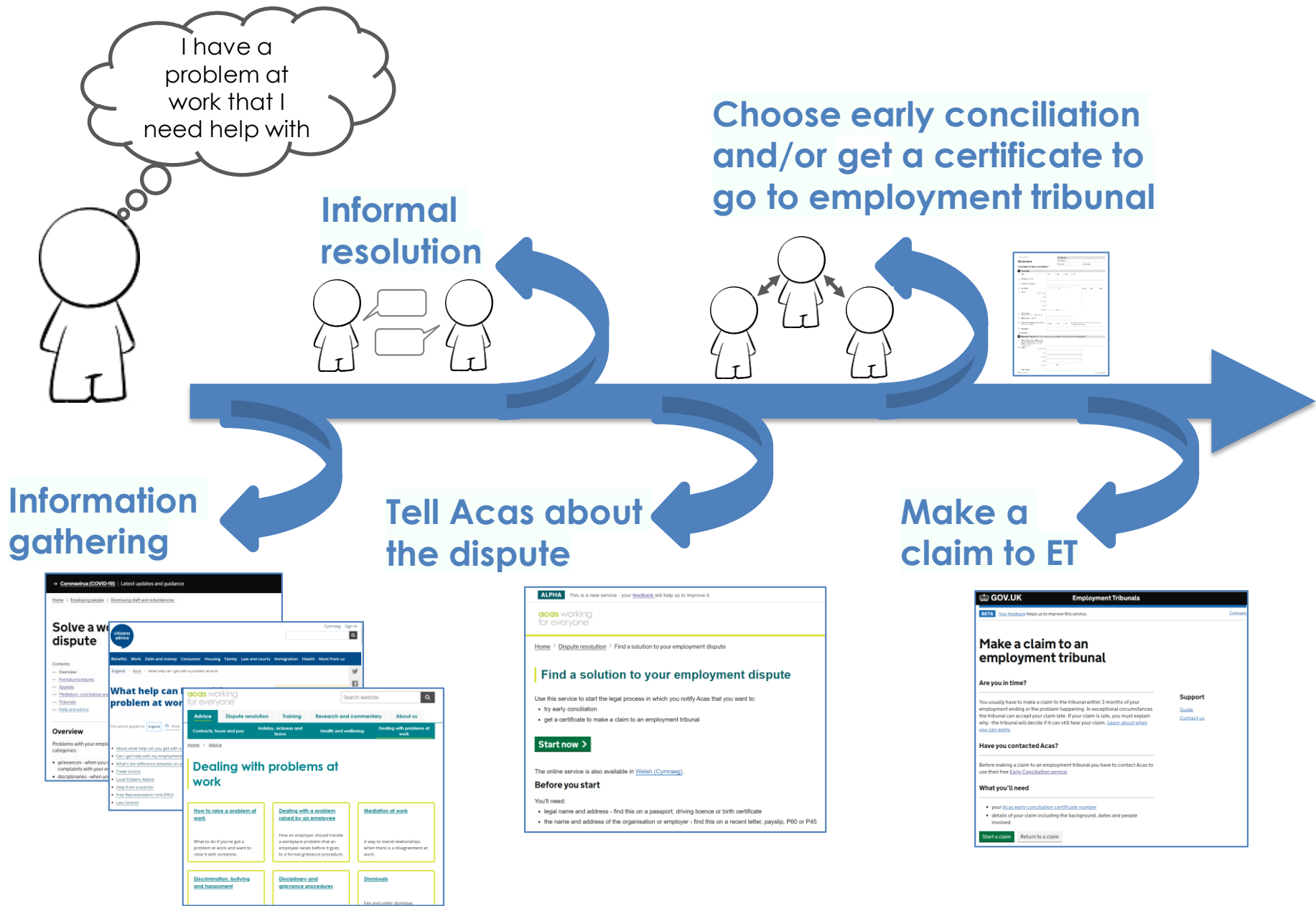


- People who work for a company, previously worked there, or may have been refused work there
- Representatives of workers/employees
- Employers
- Representatives of employers.

## 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



# 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

35

Primary user research sessions, mapping pain points

60+

User needs generated

User Group	Sprint 1 Understanding the pain points	Sprint 2 Understanding the pain points (cont.)	Sprint 3 Developing concepts and additional validation	Sprint 4
<b>Internal Users</b> (including conciliators, ECSO, CAT, DCT and other support staff from various grades)	In-depth video interviews with <b>15 internal</b> users: Mix of conciliators and support staff (mix of regions, team-based vs. Individual, and accessibility needs)	<b>Slido sessions with over 230</b> conciliators and CM's across regions and grades to validate findings in Sprint 1	In-depth video interviews with <b>6 CMs</b> .	Internal concept testing survey*: 47 responses from a wide range of ACAS staff.
<b>External Users</b> (claimants, respondents, & representatives)		In-depth video interviews with <b>15 external</b> users: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 representatives from various unions and legal firms on either claimant or respondent side</li><li>• 6 respondents (HR officers or in-house legal departments)</li><li>• 2 claimants with accessibility needs</li></ul>		External concept testing survey: 14 responses + In-depth video interviews with <b>5 additional external users</b> 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

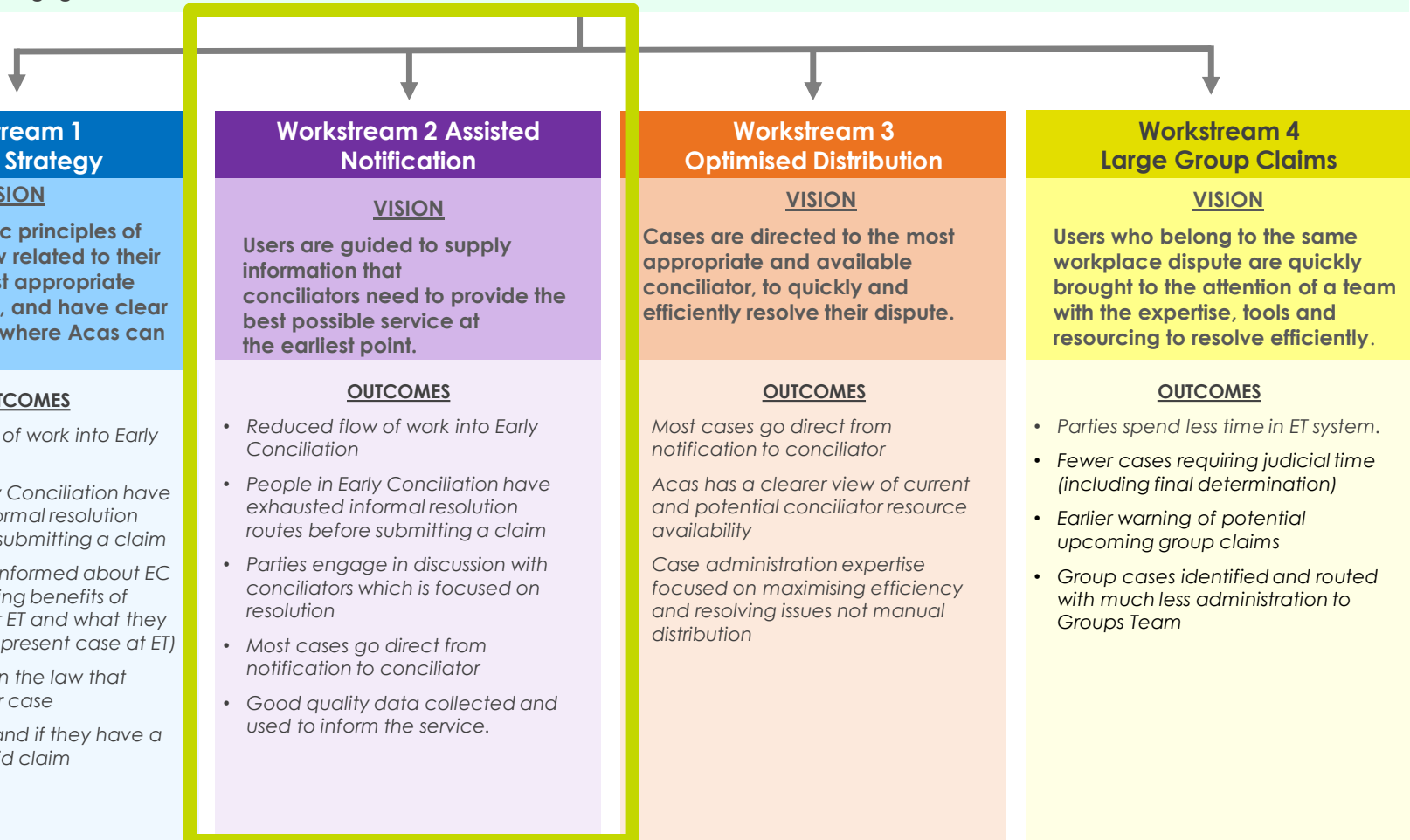


## Find a solution to your workplace dispute - overall programme vision

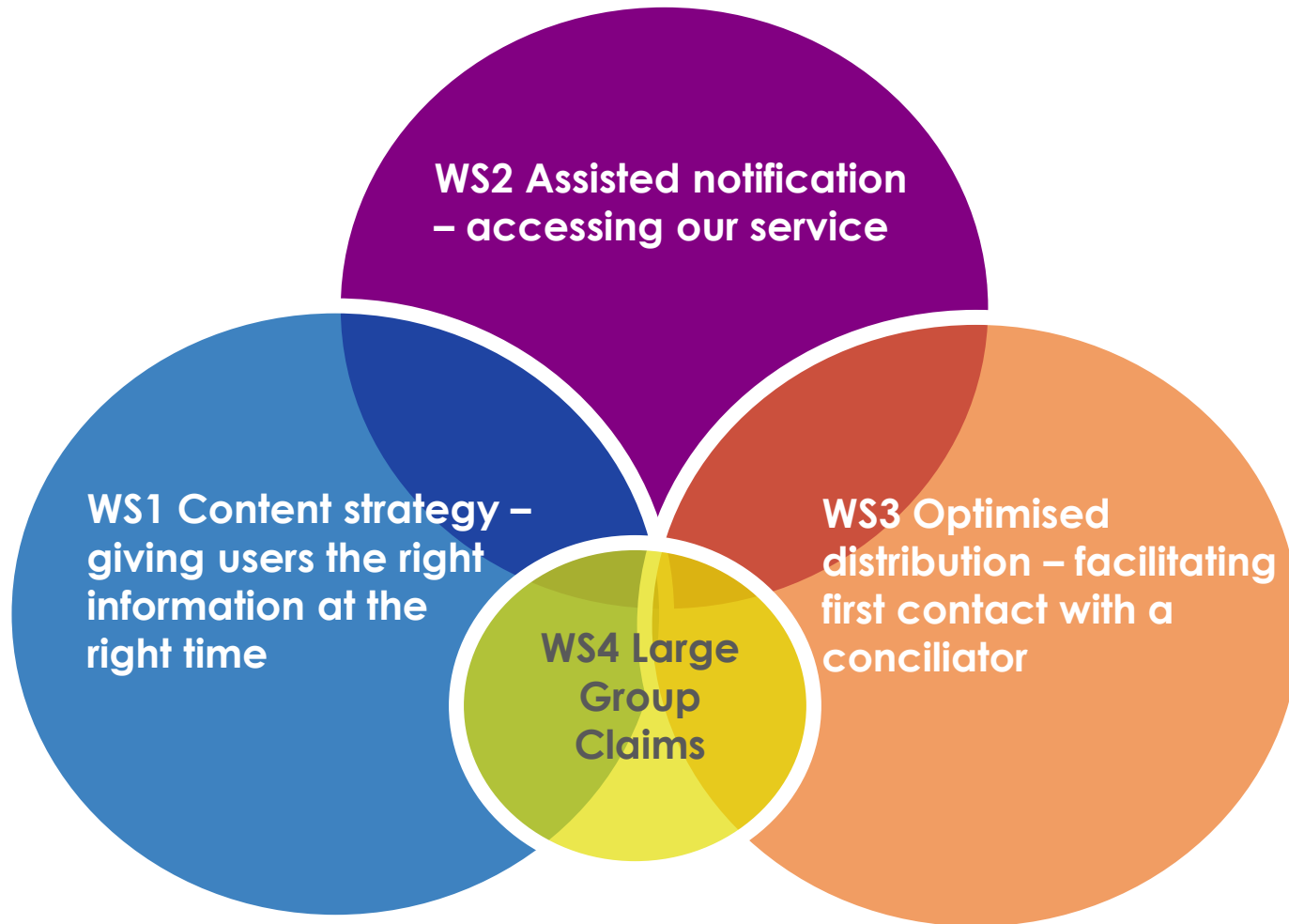
People involved in a workplace dispute have clearer understanding of how they can reach a quicker, more cost effective resolution at the earliest point possible

### 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



# 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 lead**  
Curtis Goode

**Product lead**  
Jess Brown

**Technical lead**  
Mandeep Dhillon

**Policy & comms lead**  
Tony Lowe

**Evaluation lead**  
Andrew Sutherland

**Finance lead**  
Dave 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

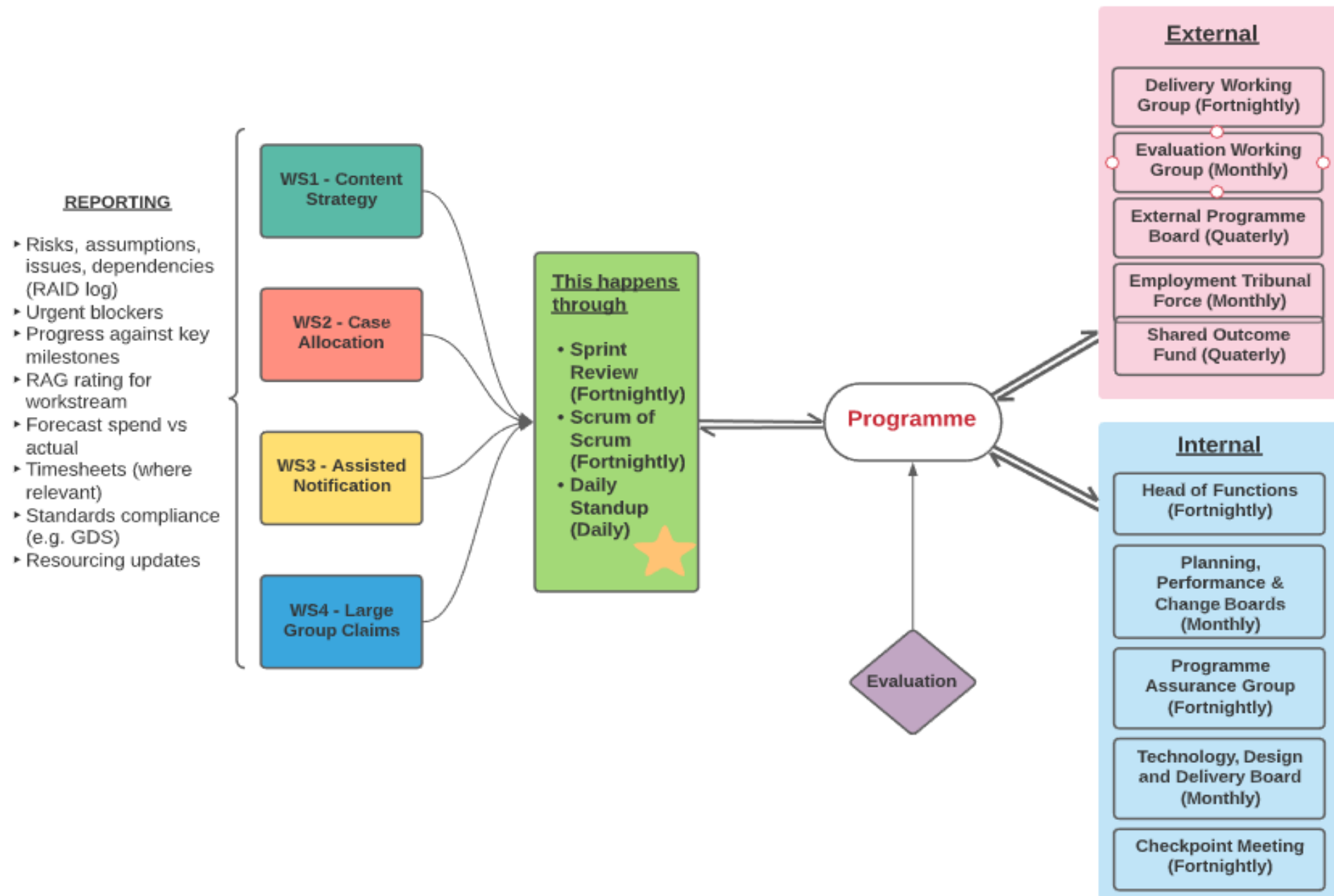


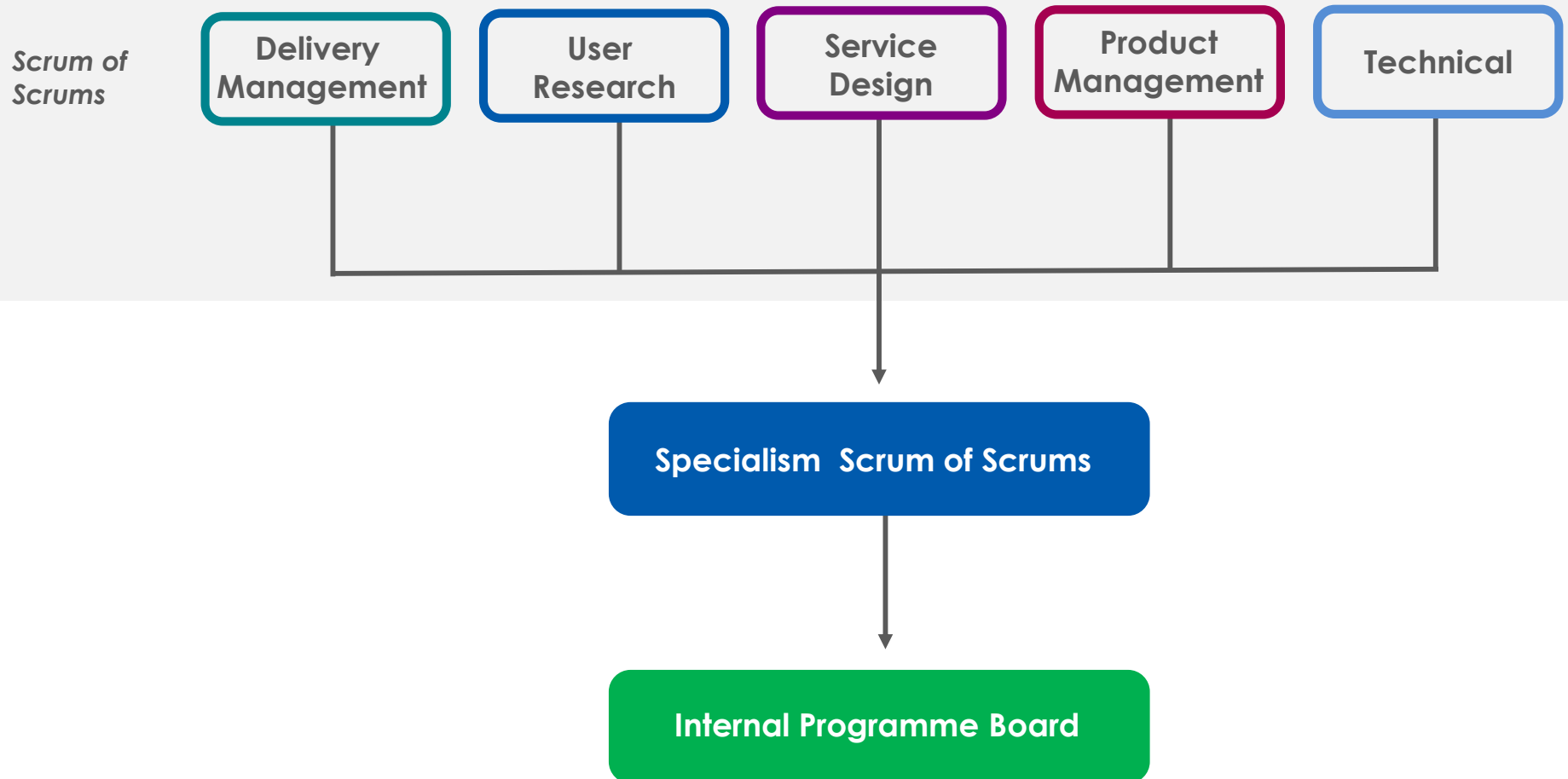
## Attendees

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



# Governance





**Communications plan – ensure that each workstream engages with Programme Board, users and stakeholders**



- 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.

Programme team's  
main communication  
forum



Our secure source in saving all  
documents for each workstream,  
linking with Teams for quick edits



Key platform for providing updates  
and publishing recordings and slides  
to main staff.



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.

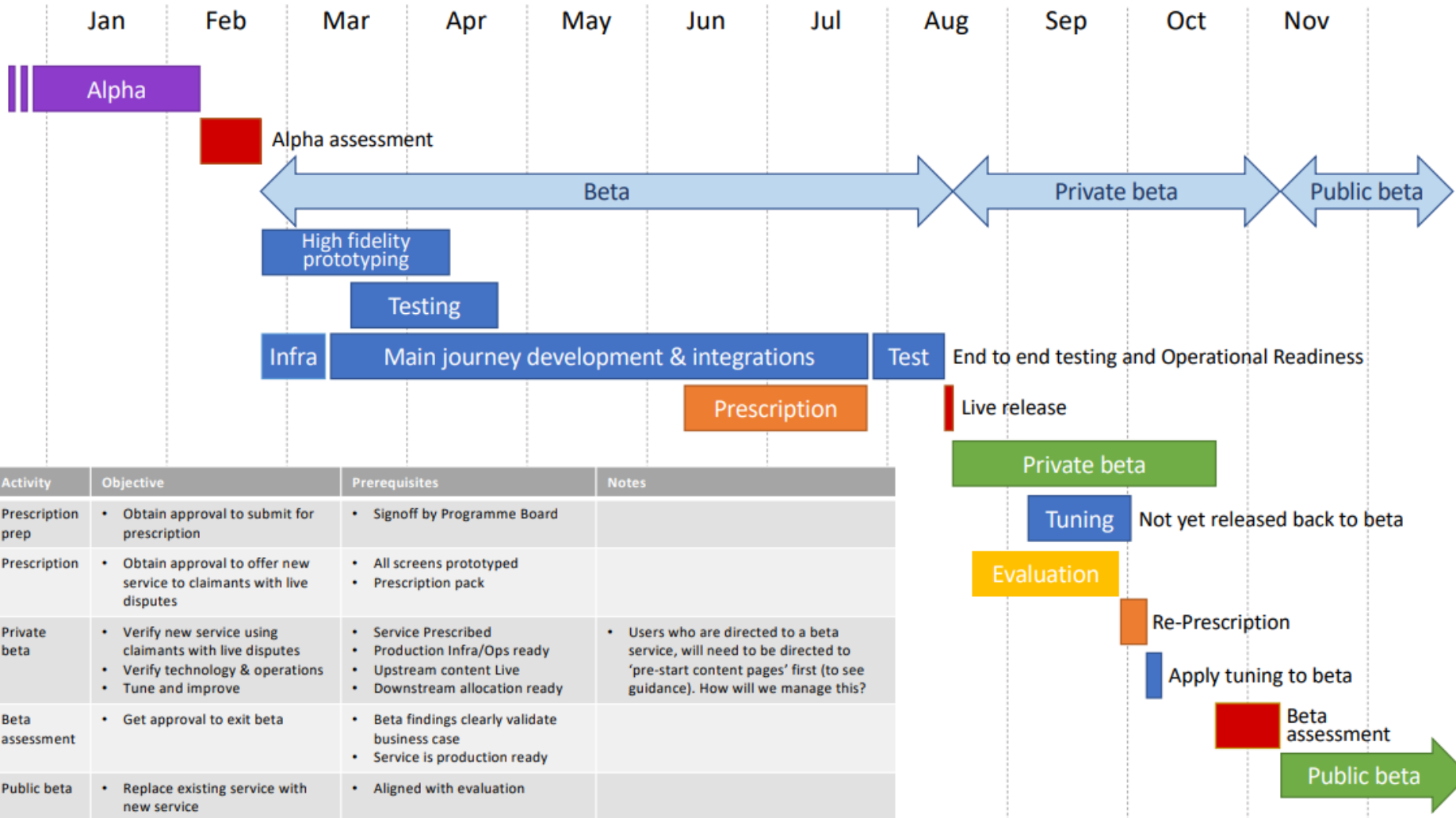
## **Four standard KPIs**

- 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



- 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