As part of the CQI's centenary celebrations, *Quality World* has been looking at the past 100 years, focusing on each decade, to highlight an example of a major development that influenced the quality profession

CQI | IRCA

LEADING QUALITY FOR 100 YEARS

AGILE METHODOLOGIES

2000s

- Agile refers to an organisation's ability to successfully respond to changes in an uncertain and turbulent environment. This idea is the cornerstone of the Agile Manifesto (The Manifesto for Agile Software Development).
- Four core values place more importance on individuals and interactions over processes and tools, working software over comprehensive documentation, customer collaboration over contract negotiation, and responding to change over following a plan.
- The Agile Manifesto also has 12 key principles for better ways of developing software.
- While Agile and its manifesto were created to address issues in software development, its values and principles have important applications in project management, business analysis and making workplaces more efficient.

2001

In February 2001, 17 software practitioners created the Agile Manifesto, at a ski resort in Utah, US. The group wanted to establish common principles at a time when software development involved the arbitrary mixing of old and new methodologies. Frameworks such as Scrum, Extreme Programming and Feature-Driven Development were all gradually being adopted, but there was no consistent philosophy to anchor the different approaches.

In identifying commonalities and differences in new and existing methodologies, the group came up with the Agile Manifesto's four key principles, establishing a philosophical foundation for software development. It placed emphasis on people over processes and on being flexible to change.

Agile Alliance

The group named itself the Agile Alliance. It included Martin Fowler, Chief Scientist at ThoughtWorks; Dave Thomas (quoted, right), co-author of *The Pragmatic Programmer*; and Jim Highsmith, Executive Consultant at ThoughtWorks.

Within a few months, 12 more principles for software development were added to the manifesto. It was posted online at agilemanifesto.org and went on to be signed by thousands of people. The document has been translated into 68 languages.

Several members of the group established a non-profit organisation, also named Agile Alliance, to create a permanent base to support professionals who advocate Agile values. The organisation hosts events and conferences, and its corporate members include Lockheed Martin, HP and Capital One. Its affiliates include Agile Alliance Brazil and Agile Alliance New Zealand.

Since those early days, people have interpreted the Agile Manifesto beyond software development and the values and principles have been applied in the wider context of "business agility" to all kinds of product developments, services and functions.

"I think the Agile Manifesto has helped teams around the world rethink their priorities and, in the process, has helped re-humanise software development"

DAVE THOMAS