Bitesize

GCSE Bitesize Computer Science
Steve Furber on software planning

I'm Steve Furber. My main research interest at the moment is in the SpiNNaker project, which is building a machine that incorporates a million mobile phone processors in a single system that's optimised for running models of bits of the brain. So when we're planning a new substantial piece of software, then usually what we do is get a few people into a room and talk about the design of the software – what the structure is, what the major components are - and we draw block diagrams, usually on a whiteboard to start off with. And then these whiteboard pictures get captured and documented and people write down the interfaces and add detail to the point where the specification becomes sufficiently unambiguous for people then to start coding.