

**tend™ (formerly Impact Futures) and Aptem:**  
Transforming apprenticeship delivery for growth,  
quality, and innovation





Aptem is at the heart of our vision to scale and deliver an outstanding experience for every learner and every employer.

Nicole Smith, Chief Operating Officer

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## About tend™ and the Impact Futures Group

tend™ training (formerly Impact Futures) is part of the Impact Futures Group, that includes The Childcare Company and First Response First Aid. This group is reshaping Britain's skills landscape, delivering upskilling and apprenticeship programmes to over 7,000 learners and 650+ employer partners, ranging from national care providers to SMEs in the childcare and social care sectors.

The group's growth strategy centres on sector leadership, innovation, and providing a best-in-class experience for both learners and employers. With ambitious plans for further expansion, the tend™ team set out to transform operations, client experience, and compliance through the implementation of advanced technology, selecting Aptem as their preferred solution.



## The challenge: breaking down barriers to scale

The tend™ team manages complex learner and employer journeys, as well as high learner volumes and unique reporting requirements. These challenges are particularly acute in sectors like childcare, which has technology use restrictions, and healthcare, with its intricate shift and rota patterns. As a result, their incumbent systems could no longer meet their needs.

Prior to Aptem, they relied on a patchwork of systems, including PICS (ILR/data, onboarding/compliance), Smart Assessor (ePortfolio), BKSB, Cognassist, and more.

### Prior to Aptem:

- ✘ Manual, duplicated data entry, with contradictory reporting from different sources.
- ✘ Slow, admin-heavy onboarding: 'lead to start' times hampered by lack of integration.
- ✘ Compliance headaches, data doubt, and an inconsistent client/learner journey.

The team knew that rapid growth, more demanding clients, regulatory changes, and operational complexity made a unified technology platform not just desirable, but vital.



Before Aptem, data from different platforms rarely matched, admin was overwhelming, and we risked losing sight of what mattered most – helping learners and employers succeed.

**Ektaa Mahay**, Director of Audit and Compliance

## Why Aptem? And what changed?

A competitive review showed tend's™ need for a single, end-to-end platform to streamline operations, automate workflows, and provide smarter data management as the business scaled rapidly.

The organisation piloted Aptem for improvements in lead-to-start conversion speed, then successfully completed a 'big bang' switchover in August 2023.

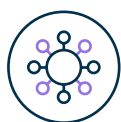
### Aptem now provides:



A seamless, integrated platform for onboarding, compliance, ePortfolio management, and reporting – supporting both apprenticeship and commercial learners.



Power BI dashboards, fed by real-time Aptem data, offering staff and employers actionable insights at scale and in real time.



Integration with tend's™ CRM and other business systems, reducing errors and accelerating time to value.



A continually evolving system, offering the customisability required by an ambitious organisation. It is designed to flex and adapt to unique needs, supporting their long-term 'Delivering Excellence' strategy of continuous improvement.



Our teams have moved from being data gatherers to data analysts. Now, we spend more time adding value for our clients instead of chasing spreadsheets.

**Amanda Kerr**, Customer Success Director



With a single source of truth across onboarding, compliance, and learner progress, we're able to use our data more effectively.

**Ektaa Mahay**, Director of Audit and Compliance

## Empowering stakeholders

The recent changes have positively impacted everyone involved:



### For employers

- ✓ Instantly access real-time dashboards – no more waiting for monthly reports.
- ✓ Manage multiple sites and hundreds of learners all at once.



### For development coaches

- ✓ More time available for learners and employers.
- ✓ Less administrative work.
- ✓ Better tools for feedback and support.



### For learners

- ✓ Clear, step-by-step learning plans and progress checks.
- ✓ Access to AI-driven, innovative tools to help maintain learning momentum.
- ✓ Improved reviews that support wellbeing and encourage progress.



### For compliance and quality teams

- ✓ Consistent, auditable records.
- ✓ Greatly reduced risk of errors.
- ✓ Readiness for future Ofsted requirements on inclusion and support.



Employers love having real-time dashboards – they really value the transparency and ability to instantly see their learners' progress and spot issues, without waiting for a monthly report. Our team can now spend more time with clients instead of on admin tasks.

**Amanda Kerr**, Customer Success Director

## The importance and evolution of technology to senior leadership

Technology is central to tend's™ plans for ambitious growth and the increasing complexity of operations. It underpins the organisation's transition from manual, administration-heavy processes to value-added, strategic analysis, empowering staff, learners, and employers.

Investment in technology is crucial for recruitment and retention in a competitive, regulated sector. The organisation has recently focused efforts on rolling out advanced Power BI dashboards for live employer reporting and analytics.



Technology isn't just an operational tool for us – it's central to our strategic vision and our ability to grow.

**Sean Riley,**  
Chief of Transformation



## Innovation and AI

With the regulatory landscape evolving rapidly and a continued emphasis on quality, tend™ is embracing Aptem's latest advancements in technology.



### AI and the virtual assistant pilot

- ✓ tend™ became early adopters of Aptem's integrated AI tools, which include a virtual assistant, progress monitoring tool, 'Checkpoint', and enhanced reviews functionality.
- ✓ Learners have given 'incredible feedback' on the value and support provided by the AI-powered virtual assistant.
- ✓ The organisation continues to test, refine, and embed these AI tools to support staff and personalisation across the learner journey.



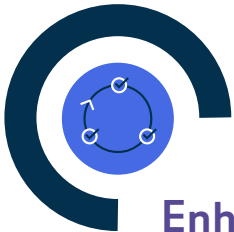
The virtual assistant and checkpoints are a game changer, and will enable us to evidence in-year progress, which is generally tricky to capture. We were part of the pilot group for the virtual assistant, and we have had incredible feedback from learners around that.

**Becki Lee**, Director of Quality



Checkpoint has been really helpful in highlighting my strengths and the areas I need to develop. It's boosted my confidence as I prepare for my EPA. The feedback is clear and well aligned with my programme, and I value being able to revisit previous checkpoints to track my progress and review the questions.

**Learner feedback**



## Enhanced reviews

- ✓ tend™ is leveraging new Aptem features, including AI-driven review summaries that are seamlessly integrated with Microsoft Teams for enhanced usability. The AI can summarise review conversations and, in the near future, will automatically carry forward action points to subsequent reviews – streamlining the process and reducing administrative workload.
- ✓ Separately, the team has undertaken a substantial project to redesign the progress review process. This includes separating out skills scans so that progress reviews can focus much more on learners’ experiences, challenges, and support needs, as well as agreeing targets and actions.
- ✓ Additional review steps and evidencing features have been built into Aptem to address increased emphasis on additional learning needs, particularly in response to Ofsted’s proposed changes.



The new reviews functionality **saves a significant 15-30 minutes of admin time per review**. By adopting it, we’re giving Development Coaches time back so they can focus on what matters: helping learners and employers achieve.

**Becki Lee, Director of Quality**



The new reviews are fantastic – they’re clearly saving a significant amount of time, easily 15 minutes or more. Learners are engaging really well too, as the format feels more like a conversation, giving them the confidence to speak more freely.

**Development Coach feedback**



## Planning for success

Becki Lee and her team are excited to be rolling out a new and innovative delivery model. This initiative, shaped by valuable feedback from both learners and employers, represents a complete overhaul of their learning plans. At its core is a flexible, 'any place, any time' approach, with all learning digitised and available on demand.

Aptem will serve as the central communications platform, placing it at the heart of both the learner and employer experience. The team is leveraging Aptem sub-programmes within learning plans to create more flexible and personalised learning pathways, ensuring adaptability to diverse learner needs.



This approach goes beyond enhancing user experience and learner satisfaction. It also benefits our quality and delivery teams, driving down Out-of-Funding (OOF) rates, increasing attendance and engagement, and ultimately leading to better learner outcomes.

**Gemma Forder,**  
Learning Platform Lead



The new delivery model is truly transformative, placing learners at the centre of everything we do. It reflects the voices of both learners and employers, ensuring their needs shape the experience. As Development Coaches, we're proud to champion this approach and excited to share the positive impact it's already having.

**Delivery team feedback**



## Partnership and change management

Gemma Forder acknowledges that “change management is always the hardest part. We therefore invested heavily in support for our staff: drop-in sessions, weekly Q&As, workshops, and close engagement with the Aptem team.” This investment in supporting their valued staff is paying off.

### Success factors:



Regular contact and responsive expert help, especially during migration, pilots, and course development, was critical.



Aptem’s client support is repeatedly called out as “phenomenal”, hands-on, consultative, and proactive.



Change on this scale is never easy, but the support we’ve had from the Aptem team made all the difference. Where we had bumps in the road, the Aptem team was there to support, troubleshoot, and ensure we kept moving forward.

As a technology partner, Aptem’s collaboration has helped us innovate faster and ensure we build the right solution for our scale.

**Becki Lee**, Director of Quality

# Operational and strategic impact



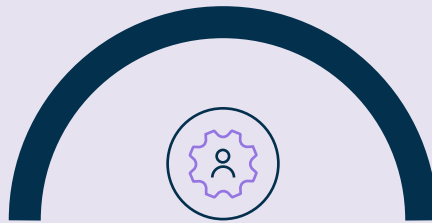
## Reduced onboarding times

The organisation is now able to scale much more effectively, onboarding learners much faster without increasing administrative workload or reducing the quality of learner experience. All of this supports its ambitious business growth targets.



Our 'lead to start' conversion time has gone from **31 days to 9.4 days.**

**Shahnee King**, Head of Enrolment



## Increased staff efficiency

Internal teams spend less time on manual admin and more on service, quality, and partnership.



The new reviews functionality saves a significant **15-30 minutes of admin time per review.**

**Becki Lee**, Director of Quality



## Learner engagement

Aptem is seamlessly integrated into learners' daily routines, supporting them to stay organised, on track, and progressing toward their goals.



Just **6 weeks** into our new delivery model, and we have already seen **learner satisfaction rates improve.**

**Becki Lee**, Director of Quality



### Better compliance outcomes

Data reliability, confidence, compliance, and audit-readiness have all improved significantly.



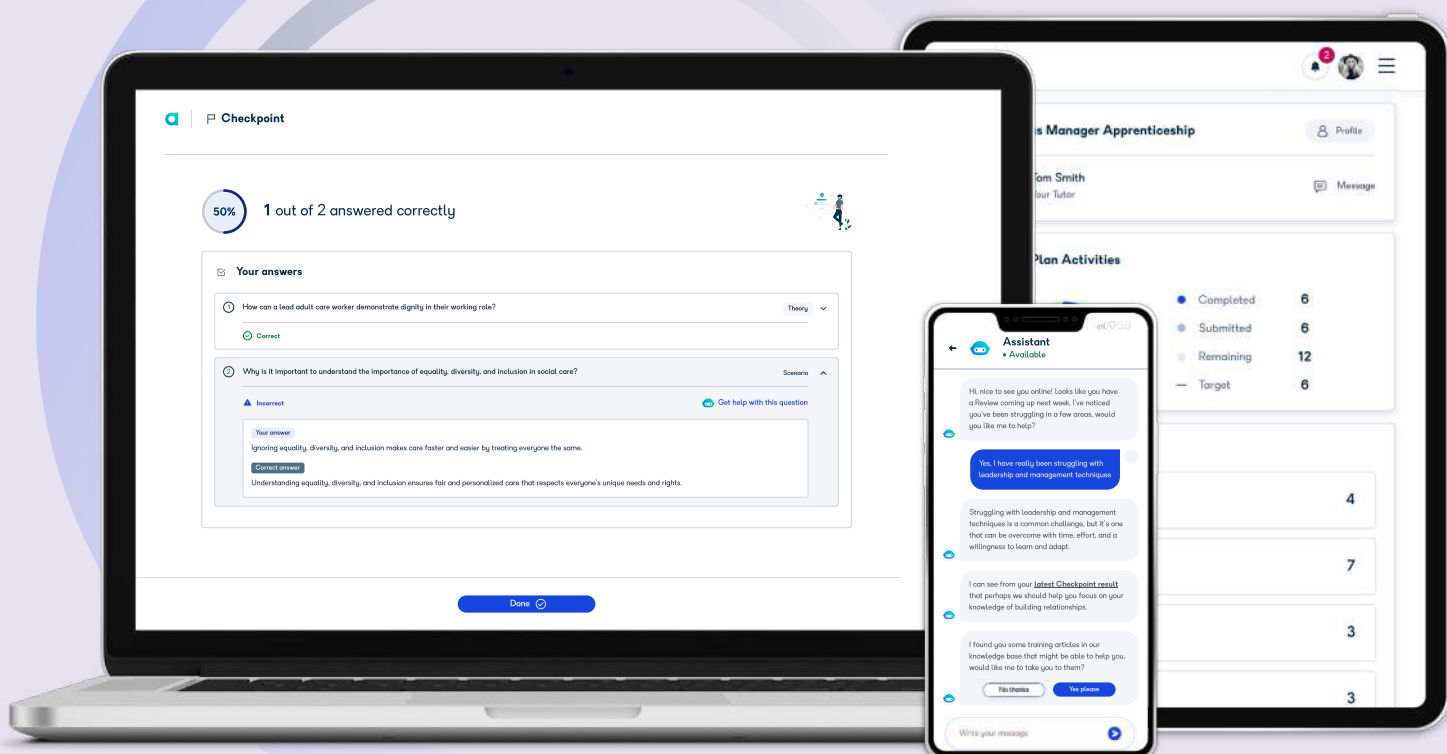
### Reporting efficiency

There has been a step change in reporting efficiency, from data gathering to value-adding analysis.



### Improved employer satisfaction

Improved employer satisfaction with greater transparency and self-serve reporting.



## What's next for tend™?

tend™ is set for continued growth, underpinned by a commitment to ongoing, technology-led transformation. The organisation aims to maintain and expand its sector leadership in childcare and social care through modular, cross-programme learning and inclusive support for individuals with additional learning needs.

The team sees Aptem as an essential enabler of its vision to be the learning provider of choice for Britain's critical service sectors by 2029. Its functionality underpins what their clients and learners value: talented people; high-quality teaching and learning; innovative curriculum design; strong client relationship management; and leading-edge learner technology.



Aptem is an important part of our growth journey. With a single, integrated platform, we can take on more clients and deliver an even better service.

**Sean Riley**, Chief of Transformation



## The future with Aptem

tend's™ journey proves how the right technology, and the right partnership, can empower apprenticeship providers to scale efficiently, innovate boldly, and deliver an outstanding experience for every stakeholder.

The team has undergone a significant transformation, evolving from labour-intensive and fragmented processes to a digitally advanced, highly scalable, and forward-thinking apprenticeship and workforce development provider.

## Ready to move from admin to impact?

By embracing digital integration, apprenticeship providers can accelerate growth, respond swiftly to sector challenges, and deliver exceptional outcomes for learners, employers, and staff alike.

Contact Aptem for a conversation on transforming your apprenticeship delivery.

[enquiries@aptem.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aptem.co.uk)

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Aptem is one of the fastest-growing SaaS software companies to manage vocational training, skills and employability programmes.

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- ✓ **Aptem Enrol**, remote onboarding of apprenticeship students, for colleges.
- ✓ **Aptem Employ**, a unique, flexible, award-winning employability system that helps to get people back into the workplace quickly and for the long term.
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