



Aberforth Smaller Companies Trust plc

Monthly Factsheet

31 May 2023

Fund structure

The Fund is an investment trust – a type of investment company/collective investment fund – with a Premium share listing on the Main Market of the London Stock Exchange.

Manager: Aberforth Partners

The Fund is managed by Aberforth's investment team of six fund managers:

Sam Ford	Jeremy Hall
Euan Macdonald	Rob Scott Moncrieff
Peter Shaw	Christopher Watt

Further information on the investment team is available at www.aberforth.co.uk.

Benchmark: NSCI (XIC)

The Fund's benchmark and primary investment universe is the Numis Smaller Companies Index (excluding Investment Companies). This index is rebalanced every January and its profile at the date of this Factsheet was:

Number of companies	340
Total market value	£135bn
Largest constituent	£2.3bn
Largest constituent if index rebalanced at Factsheet date	£1.7bn

Key Fund information

Total investments	£1,286m
Number of investments	80
Active share	74.5%
Gearing - bank debt in use	£75m
Net gearing/(liquidity)	5.7%
Total net assets	£1,217m
Ordinary shares in issue	84,794,605
NAV	1,434.73p
Share price	1,244.00p
Discount/(premium)	13.3%
Market value	£1,055m
Launch date	10 Dec 90
Next year-end	31 Dec 23

Fees & charges

Management fee* (12m to 31 Dec 22)	0.73%
Performance fee	None
Ongoing charges (at 31 Dec 22 & includes Management fee)	0.80%

* Further details of the Management fee are available at www.aberforth.co.uk.

Yield & dividends

Yield	3.1%
Interim dividend (paid 26 Aug 22)	12.05p
Final dividend (paid 8 Mar 23)	26.95p
Special dividend (paid 8 Mar 23)	8.30p

Objective

The Fund's objective is to achieve a total return greater than that of the NSCI (XIC) over the long term by investing in a diversified portfolio of small UK quoted companies.

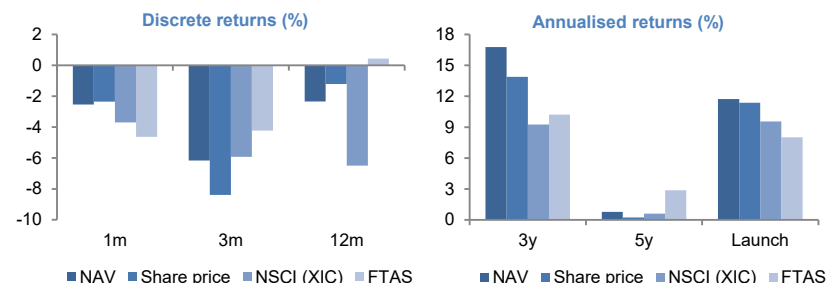
Investment style: Value

Aberforth are value investors who buy shares in companies that they calculate to be selling below their intrinsic value. This is determined through detailed financial and industrial analysis, combined with a valuation approach that focuses on both stockmarket and corporate worth.

Investment performance (annualised total returns)

Growth (%)	1m	3m	12m	3y	5y	Launch
NAV	-2.5	-6.2	-2.3	16.8	0.8	11.7
Share price	-2.4	-8.4	-1.2	13.9	0.2	11.4
NSCI (XIC)	-3.7	-5.9	-6.5	9.3	0.6	9.6
FTAS	-4.6	-4.2	0.4	10.2	2.9	8.0

Notes: 1m & 3m returns not annualised; Launch date = 10 Dec 90; FTAS = FTSE All-Share Index.



Monthly investment commentary: May

May was poor for the UK equity markets. The headline rate of inflation is declining but the core measure is proving stickier than expected. As the market digested the implications for interest rates, the FTSE All-Share fell by 4.6% in the month. Smaller companies, as measured by the NSCI (XIC), fared marginally better with a 3.7% decline. The Fund was down by 2.5%. Its value style was unhelpful but was mitigated by its high exposure to the index's "smaller small" companies, which performed relatively well.

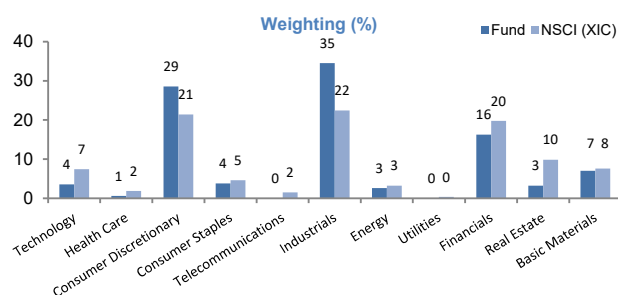
The Fund's returns were boosted by a nascent recovery from **Wincanton**. This logistics provider had fallen sharply in March following the loss of a contract with HMRC. **International Personal Finance**, the home credit provider, sustained its strong start to the year: trading continues to recover from the pandemic and the regulatory regime in Poland appears more settled. Share price declines among non-holdings also helped the Fund's relative performance. Notable were Future, Wood Group and THG, the latter two seeing bid talks with Apollo, the private equity group, falling away.

Detractors included **Card Factory**, the card retailer, which issued final results early in the month. These confirmed the on-going recovery in profits and the balance sheet, but the share price had risen very sharply in the preceding period. **Headlam**, the carpet and floor coverings distributor, warned that weaker residential demand would reduce profit margins this year. Non-holdings hindered the Fund's relative performance too. Aston Martin Lagonda continued its dramatic recent resurgence as Geely, the Chinese car manufacturer, increased its stake in the company, while Carnival, the cruise line business, rallied sharply on positive news from a competitor.

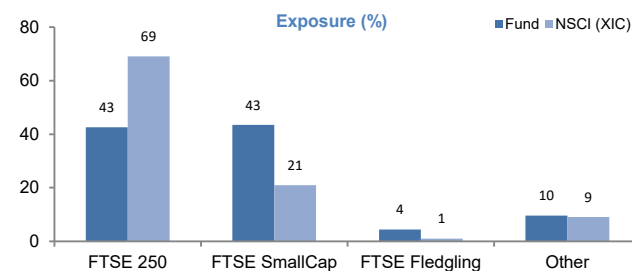
Top 10 equity investments

Name	Activity	%
FirstGroup	Bus & rail operator	3.8
Morgan Advanced Materials	Manufacture of carbon & ceramic materials	2.8
Redde Northgate	Van rental	2.7
Wilmington	Business publishing & training	2.5
Just Group	Individually underwritten annuities	2.3
Senior	Aerospace & automotive engineering	2.3
Vesuvius	Metal flow engineering	2.3
Centamin	Gold miner	2.3
SIG	Specialist building products distributor	2.2
Wincanton	Logistics	2.2

Sector exposure



Size exposure



Gearing

The Fund has a bank debt facility of £130m available for use as gearing by the Manager at any time. The net gearing/(liquidity) figure shown in the Key Fund information section indicates the percentage by which the total value of investments exceeds the total net assets.

Continuation vote & share buy-backs

The continuation of the Fund is voted on by shareholders at every 3rd AGM. The next vote will occur at the AGM in March 2026.

The Fund operates a share buy-back policy. A list of the buy-back transactions during the last 5 years is available at www.aberforth.co.uk.

Data sources & calculations

All data supplied by Aberforth, except NSCI (XIC) data (from Numis/Paul Marsh and Elroy Dimson – London Business School) and FTSE data (from FTSE International Limited).

Performance returns are total returns after all expenses and assume reinvestment of dividends. Yield is based on the Fund's trailing 12 months' dividends (excluding Specials). Active share is a measure of how the Fund's portfolio differs from the NSCI (XIC). Small companies are represented by the NSCI (XIC). Large companies are represented by the FTAS.

Risk warnings

Capital may be at risk as the value of investments may go down as well as up and is not guaranteed; therefore investors may not get back the amount originally invested. Past performance is not a guide to future performance, nor a reliable indicator of future results or performance.

Investments in shares of smaller companies are generally considered to carry a higher degree of risk as the market for their shares may be less liquid than that for shares of larger companies, making shares of smaller companies more difficult to buy and sell.

The performance of shares of smaller companies may be more volatile than the shares of larger companies over short time periods; therefore investors should regard such investments as long term.

There can be no guarantee that the investment objective of the Fund will be achieved or provide the returns sought by the Fund.

An investment in the Fund is only suitable for investors who are capable of evaluating the merits and risks of such an investment and who have sufficient resources to be able to bear any losses which may arise from such an investment (which may be equal to the whole amount invested). Such an investment should be regarded as long term in nature and complementary to existing investments in a range of other financial assets and should not form a major part of an investment portfolio.

An investment trust is a public limited company, the shares of which are traded on the main market of the London Stock Exchange. Accordingly, the ability of shareholders to sell their shares will be dependent on the market price of the shares. The shares may trade at a discount or premium to their net asset value.

Investment trusts may borrow money in order to make further investments. This is known as gearing. The effect of gearing can enhance returns to shareholders in rising markets but will have the opposite effect on returns in falling markets.

Aberforth Partners LLP does not provide retail investors with investment advice.

This document has been issued for information purposes only. It does not contain any investment recommendations or an invitation to invest in the Fund. Investors should seek advice from an authorised financial adviser prior to making investment decisions.

FTSE® is a trade mark of the London Stock Exchange Group companies and is used by FTSE International Limited under licence. All rights in the FTSE indices and/or FTSE ratings vest in FTSE and/or its licensors. Neither FTSE nor its licensors accept any liability for any errors or omissions in the FTSE indices and/or FTSE ratings or underlying data and no party may rely on any FTSE indices, ratings and/or underlying data contained in this communication. No further distribution of FTSE data is permitted without FTSE's express written consent. FTSE does not promote, sponsor or endorse the content of this communication.

Security codes & other information

Ordinary shares of 1p	Other information
SEDOL: 0006655	Launched: 10 Dec 90
ISIN: GB0000066554	Next year-end: 31 Dec 23
TIDM: ASL	LEI: 213800GZ9WC73A92Q326

Subscribe & contact

If you wish to subscribe to this Factsheet, or have any queries regarding its content, please contact Aberforth's Investor Support team:

(T) 0131 220 0733 (E) investors@aberforth.co.uk