



Aberforth Split Level Income Trust plc

Monthly Factsheet

31 January 2021

Fund structure

The Fund is a split capital investment trust – a type of investment company, or collective investment fund – with Premium (Ord) & Standard (ZDP) share listings on the Main Market of the London Stock Exchange.

Manager: Aberforth Partners

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

Sam Ford	Jeremy Hall
Euan Macdonald	Keith Muir
Peter Shaw	Christopher Watt
Alistair Whyte	

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

Investment universe: NSCI (XIC)

The Fund's 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	332
Total market value	£139n
Largest constituent	£1.6bn
Largest constituent if index rebalanced at Factsheet date	£1.5bn

Key Fund information

Total investments	£191m
Number of investments	70
Active share	75.9%
Gearing - ZDP shares	£54m
Net gearing	38.1%
Total net assets	£138m
Ord share NAV	72.55p
Ord share price	65.40p
Ord discount/(premium)	9.8%
ZDP share NAV (Accounts basis)	112.81p
ZDP share price	109.50p
ZDP discount/(premium)	2.9%

Fees & charges

Management fee* (12m to 30 Jun 20)	1.03%
Performance fee	None
Ongoing charges (at 30 Jun 20 & includes Management fee)	1.26%

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

Yield & dividends (Ord)

Yield	5.6%
1 st interim dividend (payable 9 Mar 21)	0.92p
2 nd interim dividend (paid 28 Aug 20)	2.71p

Objective

The Fund's objective is to provide Ordinary (Ord) shareholders with a high level of income, with the potential for income and capital growth, and to provide Zero Dividend Preference (ZDP) shareholders with a pre-determined final capital entitlement of 127.25p per ZDP share on the planned winding up date of 1 July 2024.

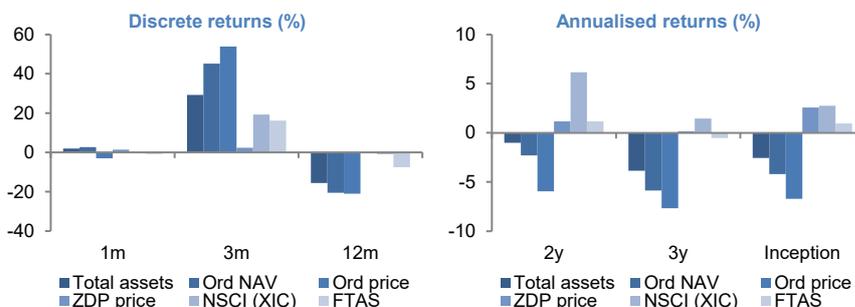
Investment style: Value

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	2y	3y	Inception
Total assets	2.0	29.3	-15.6	-1.0	-3.9	-2.6
Ord NAV	2.7	45.1	-20.5	-2.3	-5.9	-4.2
Ord price	-3.0	53.9	-21.0	-6.0	-7.7	-6.7
ZDP price	1.4	2.3	0.0	1.2	0.2	2.6
NSCI (XIC)	-0.2	19.2	-0.9	6.2	1.4	2.7
FTAS	-0.8	16.1	-7.5	1.2	-0.5	0.9

Notes: 1m & 3m returns not annualised; Inception = 30 Jun 17; FTAS = FTSE All-Share Index.



Monthly investment commentary: January

After their rapid ascent in the wake of November's vaccine news, global stockmarkets drifted modestly lower in January. A Democratic blue-wave in the US paves the way for further fiscal stimulus in the world's largest economy. In the UK, stockmarket declines were muted despite the new virus strains and the impact on growth from the on-going third lockdown. These concerns were offset by the rapid vaccine roll-out and easing of the Brexit hangover, which should allow broader appreciation of the relative valuation attractions of UK equities. Smaller companies out-performed their larger peers: the NSCI (XIC) fell by 0.2% and the FTSE All-Share by 0.8%. The market's re-engagement with both value and the 'smaller small' companies continued, which helped the Fund return 2.0%.

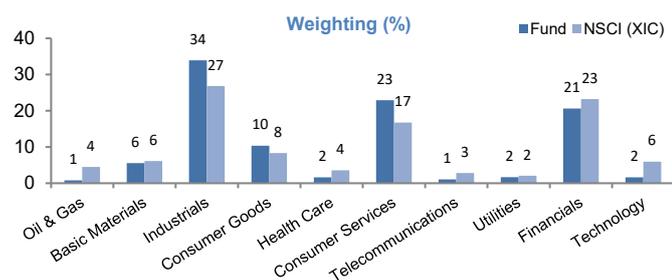
Newspaper publisher Reach was the largest positive contributor. An update indicated that the successful transition of its brands online continues and that profits would be ahead of expectations. Similarly, Wincanton upgraded profit expectations as its logistics business benefits from a surge in e-commerce fulfilment. Meanwhile, motor dealership Lookers bounced sharply as it was successfully readmitted to trading after the release of its delayed interim accounts. More broadly, there are signs that the M&A momentum established among UK smaller companies in the second half of 2020 is continuing and coincides with an increase in IPO market activity. Pub operator Marstons, which is not a holding, received an acquisition proposal from private equity late in the month.

Among the holdings that detracted from performance was specialty lender Provident Financial, which retraced some of its end of year recovery on no specific news. Separately, engineer Vesuvius had recaptured its pre-pandemic share price highs and succumbed to profit taking.

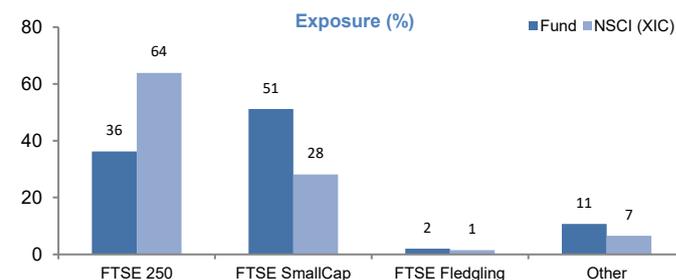
Top 10 equity investments

Name	Activity	%
Reach	UK newspaper publisher	5.2
Brewin Dolphin Holdings	Private client fund manager	3.3
Wincanton	Logistics	3.2
Vesuvius	Metal flow engineering	3.1
TI Fluid Systems	Automotive parts manufacturer	3.0
Morgan Advanced Materials	Manufacture of carbon & ceramic materials	2.9
Bloomsbury Publishing	Independent publishing house	2.6
Rathbone Brothers	Private client fund manager	2.5
Redde Northgate	Van rental	2.4
CMC Markets	Financial derivatives dealer	2.4

Sector exposure



Size exposure



Gearing

The Fund's Ord shares are geared by the capital entitlement of the ZDP shares which will rise continuously until the planned winding up date of 1 July 2024. The net gearing figure shown in the Key Fund information section is the percentage by which the total value of investments exceeds the total net assets.

Hurdle rates & redemption yields

The Fund's latest hurdle rates and redemption yields are available from the AIC website at www.theaic.co.uk; select Statistics, then ZDP Analytics.

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

COVID-19 virus – in the context of market price risk, please note the exceptional circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and the responses to it. These have profoundly affected macro-economic activity, the operations of companies around the world and their stockmarket valuations. The universe of UK small quoted companies market invested in by the Fund, has seen a significant fall in its aggregate valuation due to the uncertainties arising from the spread of this virus. Aberforth Partners LLP and the Directors of Aberforth Split Level Income Trust plc are closely monitoring market developments as the impact of the pandemic progresses.

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 dividends and 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.

The Fund's Ordinary shares (Ords) are geared by the Zero Dividend Preference shares (ZDPs) and rank for repayment of capital after the ZDPs and any creditors of the Fund. A positive net asset value for the Ords will be dependent upon the Fund's assets being sufficient to meet the prior capital entitlements of the holders of the ZDPs. The Ords should therefore be regarded as carrying above average risk. The ZDPs are not a protected or guaranteed investment. In particular, should the Fund be wound up prior to its planned winding up date, holders of ZDPs would only receive their accrued capital entitlement to the date of winding up - which would be less than the final anticipated capital entitlement of the ZDPs.

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.

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Security codes & other information

Ord shares	ZDP shares	Other information
SEDOL: BYPBD39	SEDOL: BYPBD51	Launched: 3 Jul 17
ISIN: GB00BYPBD394	ISIN: GB00BYPBD519	Next year-end: 30 Jun 21
TIDM: ASIT	TIDM: ASIZ	LEI: 21380013QYW082NZV529
Shares in issue: 190,250,000	Shares in issue: 47,562,500	Planned winding-up: 1 Jul 24
Market value: £124m	Market value: £52m	

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