



Aberforth UK Small Companies Fund

Monthly Factsheet

31 December 2023

Fund structure

The Fund is an authorised unit trust scheme under the Financial Services & Markets Act 2000 and also a UCITS scheme as defined by the Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook. The Fund is open-ended and issues Accumulation (Acc) and Income (Inc) units.

Manager: Aberforth Partners

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

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

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

Benchmark: NSCI (XIC)

The Fund's primary investment universe is the Numis Smaller Companies Index (excluding Investment Companies). It is used as a target and comparator benchmark. The NSCI (XIC) index is rebalanced every January and its profile at the date of this Factsheet was:

Number of companies	353
Total market value	£143bn
Largest constituent	£1.7bn
Largest constituent if index rebalanced at Factsheet date	£1.7bn

Key Fund information

Total investments	£137m
Number of investments	78
Active share	75.4%
Total net assets	£136m
Issue price (Acc)	£310.34
Cancellation price (Acc)	£303.80
Issue price (Inc)	£204.95
Cancellation price (Inc)	£200.63
Launch date	20 Mar 91
Next year-end	31 Dec 24

Fees & charges

Ongoing charges (at 30 Jun 23 & includes Management fee)	0.81%
Management fee	0.75%
Performance fee	None
Initial/exit charges	0%
Dealing spread	2.13%

Yield & distributions (Inc units)

Yield	3.7%
Interim distribution (paid 31 Aug 23)	365.7168p
Final distribution (payable 28 Feb 24)	392.8468p

Objective

The investment objective of the Fund is to seek to achieve a total return, calculated on an income reinvested basis, greater than the Numis Smaller Companies Index (excluding Investment Companies) over the long term, with the focus on rolling five year periods.

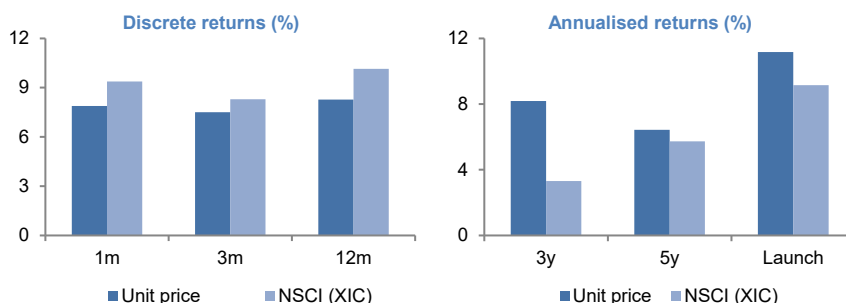
Investment style: Value

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
Unit price	7.9	7.5	8.3	8.2	6.4	11.2
NSCI (XIC)	9.4	8.3	10.1	3.3	5.7	9.1

Notes: 1m & 3m returns not annualised; Launch date = 20 Mar 91; Unit price = Cancellation price of the Fund's Accumulation units.



Monthly investment commentary: December

December was another strong month for markets, which continued to rise after accommodative commentary from the US Federal Reserve about the likely path for its interest rate policy. Inflation data provided further support for their stance and helped the FTSE All-Share rise by 4.5% in the month. The Fund was up by 8.3%, while its benchmark NSCI (XIC) rose by 9.4%. The under-performance was primarily driven by size, as the mid cap component of the benchmark, to which the Fund has a relatively low exposure, delivered the strongest returns.

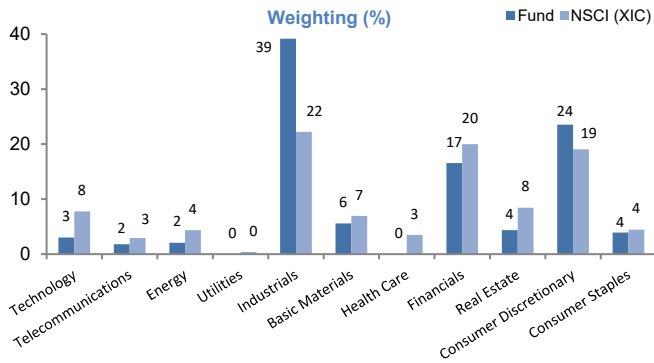
Relative performance was held back by larger non holdings such as Paragon and Carnival, which saw significant share price gains. It was also affected by holdings whose share prices were flat or slightly down in the strong market. **Wilmington**, the business publishing and training provider, was one of these. It announced no news in December but is relatively insensitive to the economy and is therefore a less likely participant in upward or downward market moves. **Bakkavor**, the food producer, was modestly down on the month. The company faces headwinds from recently announced increases in the National Living Wage, which come as it navigates a difficult inflationary backdrop across the food categories.

The two largest positive contributors to relative performance were **De La Rue**, the currency printer and authentication solutions provider, and **Videndum**, the photographic and broadcast accessories manufacturer. **De La Rue** released interim results during the month, which were received positively. These revealed an improved operating performance, as well as an extension to its banking facilities and a revised payment schedule with its pension trustees. Meanwhile, **Videndum** completed its equity raise, in which the Fund participated. This addressed the weak balance sheet and allowed the share price to end the month well above the price at which the equity was issued.

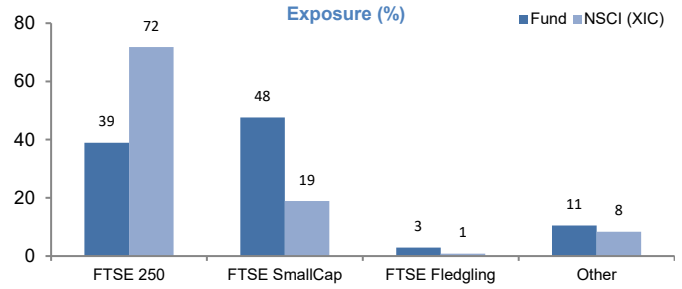
Top 10 equity investments

Name	Activity	%
Wilmington	Business publishing & training	2.7
Wincanton	Logistics	2.7
Morgan Advanced Materials	Manufacture of carbon & ceramic materials	2.6
FirstGroup	Bus & rail operator	2.5
Vesuvius	Metal flow engineering	2.5
Redde Northgate	Van rental	2.4
Just Group	Individually underwritten annuities	2.2
TI Fluid Systems	Automotive parts manufacturer	2.2
International Personal Finance	Home credit provider	2.2
Centamin	Gold miner	2.1

Sector exposure



Size exposure



Dealing & pricing information

Dealings in the Fund normally take place every business day between 9.00am and the Valuation Point that day - usually 4.30pm. Orders may be placed by calling the Fund's Dealing Line on 0345 608 0940 or contacting Aberforth using the details in the Subscribe & contact section.

The dealing spread shown in the Fees & charges section is the difference between the Issue and Cancellation prices and reflects the underlying spread on the Fund's portfolio.

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. Active share is a measure of how the Fund's portfolio differs from the NSCI (XIC). Small companies are represented by the NSCI (XIC).

Standardised past performance

Discrete total return performance over 12 month periods to 31 December:

Growth (%)	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Unit price	8.3	-10.0	30.0	-15.1	27.0
NSCI (XIC)	10.1	-17.9	21.9	-4.3	25.2

Notes: the table above is updated on a calendar quarter basis in accordance with the Financial Conduct Authority's regulations; Unit price = Cancellation price of the Fund's Accumulation units.

Security codes & other information

Acc units	Inc units	Other information
SEDOL: 0007272	SEDOL: B2N9GS7	Launched: 20 Mar 91
ISIN: GB0000072727	ISIN: GB00B2N9GS70	Next year-end: 31 Dec 24
MEXID: HIUKSC	MEXID: HIUKSI	LEI: 213800ONHC5DGL7RPF30

Subscribe & contact

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(T) 0131 220 0733

(E) investors@aberforth.co.uk

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.

The dealing spread of the Fund, which represents the difference between the buying and selling prices, will have an impact on the realisable value of any investment made in the Fund, particularly in the short term. To mitigate the impact of capital erosion, investors should regard investments in the Fund as long term.

Neither Aberforth Partners LLP or Aberforth Unit Trust Managers Limited 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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