



# Aberforth UK Small Companies Fund

## Monthly Factsheet

31 May 2022

### 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
Sonya Kim	Euan Macdonald
Rob Scott Moncrieff	Peter Shaw
Christopher Watt	

Further information on the investment team is available at [www.aberforth.co.uk](http://www.aberforth.co.uk).

### Benchmark: NSCI (XIC)

The Fund's benchmark and primary investment universe is the Numis Smaller Companies Index (excluding Investment Companies). More information on the use of this benchmark can be found in the Investment Strategy section of the Fund's Prospectus. This index is rebalanced every January and its profile at the date of this Factsheet was:

Number of companies	328
Total market value	£135bn
Largest constituent	£2.4bn
Largest constituent if index rebalanced at Factsheet date	£1.6bn

### Key Fund information

Total investments	£146m
Number of investments	74
Active share	75.3%
Total net assets	£152m
Issue price (Acc)	£293.75
Cancellation price (Acc)	£287.32
Issue price (Inc)	£205.17
Cancellation price (Inc)	£200.68
Launch date	20 Mar 91
Next year-end	31 Dec 22

### Fees & charges

Ongoing charges (at 31 Dec 21 & includes Management fee)	0.77%
Management fee	0.75%
Performance fee	None
Initial/exit charges	0%
Dealing spread	2.21%

### Yield & distributions (Inc units)

Yield	2.3%
Interim distribution (paid 31 Aug 21)	220.9820p
Final distribution (paid 28 Feb 22)	237.1483p

### 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.

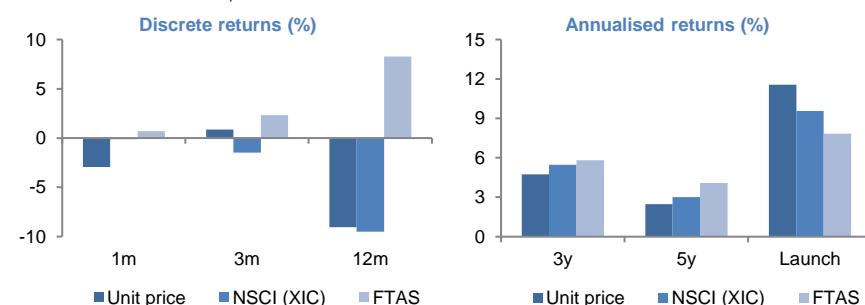
### Investment style: Value

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
Unit price	-2.9	0.9	-9.0	4.7	2.5	11.6
NSCI (XIC)	-0.1	-1.5	-9.5	5.5	3.0	9.6
FTAS	0.7	2.3	8.3	5.8	4.1	7.8

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



### Monthly investment commentary: May

Markets were little changed in May, though sentiment remains depressed by concerns about Ukraine, inflationary pressures and tightening monetary policy. The FTSE All-share rose by 0.7%, helped again by its higher weight in energy and banks, while NSCI (XIC) fell by 0.1%. Within the investment universe, the effect of size and style on performance, which had been positive in previous months, reversed course. Smaller value stocks under-performed their larger growth counterparts. This was a headwind to the Fund, whose return was -2.9%.

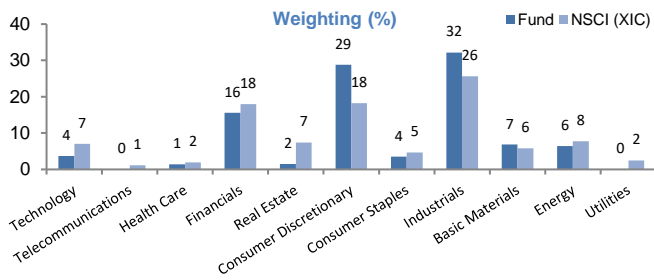
These style headwinds reflect worries about a potential recession, which affected the valuations of economically sensitive companies. **Reach** (newspaper publisher) acknowledged a tougher environment for advertising demand, in addition to the higher input costs. **Marstons** (pub operator) fell despite a reassuring trading update, which described further recovery from the pandemic and an improving balance sheet. **Robert Walters** (recruitment consultant) and **SIG** (building product distributor) de-rated on no specific news. Relative performance was further hurt by a non-holding, **ContourGlobal** (power generation), which received a bid from a US private equity company.

M&A interest in the UK market remains elevated and influenced the performance of the Fund's biggest winner in the month. **FirstGroup** (bus & rail) was approached by another US private equity firm, attracted by its low valuation and greater strategic focus following the divestment of its US businesses last year. Meanwhile, **Hostelworld** (hostel booking platform) was buoyed by a positive trading update, which noted that revenues had recovered close to the pre-pandemic levels. **Morgan Advanced Materials** (manufacturer of carbon & ceramic materials) posted an encouraging update, which pointed to encouraging volume progress and pricing power.

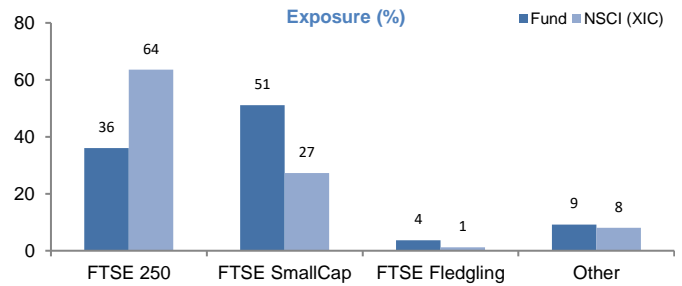
### Top 10 equity investments

Name	Activity	%
<b>FirstGroup</b>	Bus & rail operator	4.3
<b>EnQuest</b>	Oil & gas exploration and production	3.2
<b>Redde Northgate</b>	Van rental	2.8
<b>Morgan Advanced Materials</b>	Manufacture of carbon & ceramic materials	2.7
<b>Wincanton</b>	Logistics	2.6
<b>Videndum</b>	Photographic & broadcast accessories	2.6
<b>Rathbones Group</b>	Private client fund manager	2.5
<b>Robert Walters</b>	Recruitment	2.4
<b>Micro Focus</b>	Legacy software assets	2.3
<b>RPS Group</b>	Energy & environmental consulting	2.2

## 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). Large companies are represented by the FTAS.

## Standardised past performance

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

Growth (%)	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Unit price	4.9	76.7	-32.4	-4.5	6.0
NSCI (XIC)	-1.1	65.6	-25.9	-1.2	5.2

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 22
MEXID: HIUKSC	MEXID: HIUKSI	LEI: 2138000NHC5DGL7RPF30

## 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](mailto: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.**

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