



Aberforth Smaller Companies Trust plc

Monthly Factsheet

30 September 2018

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:

Euan Macdonald	Keith Muir
Richard Newbery	Peter Shaw
Christopher Watt	Alistair Whyte

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	339
Total market value	£158bn
Largest constituent	£1.9bn
Largest constituent if index rebalanced at Factsheet date	£1.5bn

Key Fund information

Total investments	£1,400m
Number of investments	84
Active share	76.0%
Gearing - bank debt in use	£18m
Net gearing/(liquidity)	1.0%
Total net assets	£1,387m
Ordinary shares in issue	90,847,811
NAV	1,526.41p
Share price	1,332.00p
Discount/(premium)	12.7%
Market value	£1,210m
Launch date	10 Dec 90
Next year-end	31 Dec 18

Fees & charges

Management fee* (12m to 31 Dec 17)	0.71%
Performance fee	None
Ongoing charges (at 31 Dec 17 & includes Management fee)	0.76%

* Details of the Management fee structure are available at www.aberforth.co.uk.

Yield & dividends

Yield	2.2%
Interim dividend (paid 31 Aug 18)	9.50p
Final dividend (paid 6 Mar 18)	19.75p
Special dividend (paid 6 Mar 18)	6.70p

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.

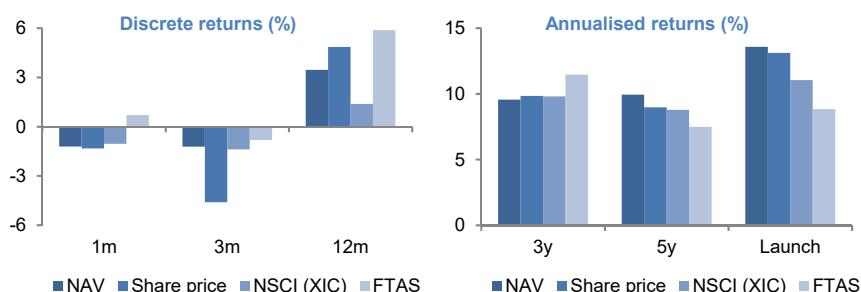
Investment style: Value

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	-1.2	-1.2	3.5	9.6	9.9	13.6
Share price	-1.3	-4.6	4.9	9.8	9.0	13.1
NSCI (XIC)	-1.1	-1.4	1.4	9.8	8.8	11.0
FTAS	0.7	-0.8	5.9	11.5	7.5	8.8

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



Investment commentary

September was a weak month for smaller companies: the NSCI (XIC) generated a return of -1.1%, which may be compared with a 0.7% gain for the FTSE All-Share. The divergence reflected Brexit continuing to dominate the UK's macro-economic discourse, this hindering the more domestically orientated NSCI (XIC). Allied to that, commodities stocks rallied after a weak period, hampering the small and mid-cap indices in relation to the FTSE 100. The Fund generated a total return of -1.2%. Size and style dynamics were modestly favourable over the month. The more important influence on performance was the fortunes of individual stocks.

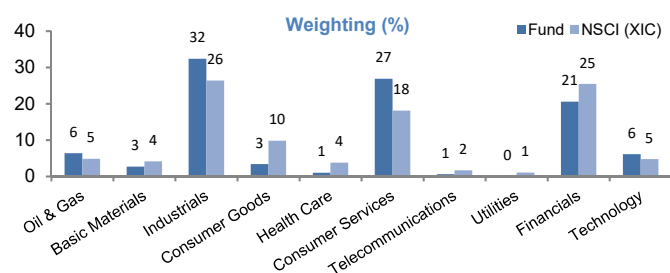
Performance was hindered by performance materials manufacturer Low & Bonar. It warned that higher raw material costs and increased competition would reduce profits. Meanwhile, specialist recruitment consultant Robert Walters succumbed to profit taking in September and consumer lender Non-Standard Finance was also a weak performer. Non-holding SolGold was the other notable impact: the miner announced that BHP Billiton had acquired a minority stake.

However, non-holdings in miners were not exclusively unhelpful: avoiding Sirius Minerals, which is incurring greater costs in developing its potash mine, boosted relative performance. Among the holdings, the share prices of Future, the media company, and Vitec, the photography supplier, responded favourably to trading updates. Elsewhere, an absence of news did not prevent the share price of telecoms test company Spirent generating a double-digit return.

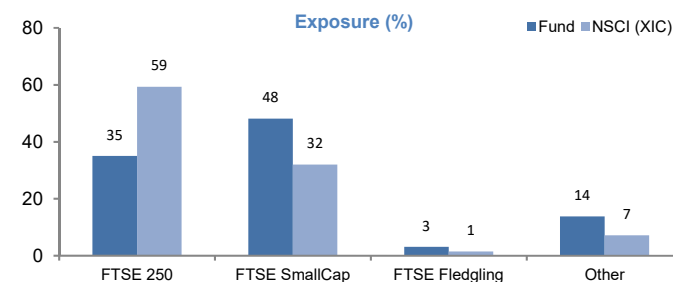
Top 10 equity investments

Name	Activity	%
Urban&Civic	Property - investment & development	2.9
Future	Special interest consumer publisher	2.7
Vitec Group	Photographic & broadcast accessories	2.7
FirstGroup	Bus & rail operator	2.7
Keller Group	Ground engineering services	2.7
Robert Walters	Recruitment	2.6
Brewin Dolphin Holdings	Private client fund manager	2.6
Grainger	Property - residential rentals	2.4
Huntsworth	Public relations	2.4
Spirent Communications	Telecoms test equipment	2.3

Sector exposure



Size exposure



Gearing

The Fund has a bank debt facility of £125m 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-ins

The continuation of the Fund is voted on by shareholders at every 3rd AGM. The next vote will occur at the AGM in March 2020.

The Fund operates a share buy-in policy. A list of the buy-in 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. 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.

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Security codes & other information

Ordinary shares of 1p	Other information
SEDOL: 0006655	Launched: 10 Dec 90
ISIN: GB0000066654	Next year-end: 31 Dec 18
TIDM: ASL	LEI: 213800GZ9WC73A92Q326

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