

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**INVESTMENT COMPANY TRAILBLAZERS: AIC PUBLISHES WINNERS OF ANNUAL BEST INFORMATION TO SHAREHOLDERS AWARDS**

At the **Association of Investment Companies (AIC)** Annual Dinner last night, the AIC announced the winners of its Best Information to Shareholders Awards. **Charles Cade, Investment Companies Research, Numis Securities and Chairman** of the AIC's independent judging panel, presented the awards.

These awards aim to demonstrate the industry's commitment to excellent shareholder communications and promote best practice, incorporating report and accounts, factsheets, newsletters and website categories.

Joining Charles Cade on the independent judging panel were **Mark Dampier, Head of Research, Hargreaves Lansdown** and **David Stevenson, regular columnist for the Financial Times, Investment Week and Investors Chronicle**. The judges were unanimously impressed by the high standard of this year's entries and felt that this reflected an increasing awareness and sophistication of communications between investment companies and shareholders.

**Best Report & Accounts - Generalist**

**Winner: Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust PLC**

The judges found the concise summary leaflets particularly attractive and thought they would be useful for private investors. This, combined with a frank performance review from the Chairman and Fund Manager and a good explanation of private equity investments, made Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust the front-runner for the third year running.

**Runner-up: JP Morgan Claverhouse Investment Trust plc**

Great breakdowns with sector analysis and key performance data supplemented the clear layout and good use of imagery in this report and accounts.

**Best Report & Accounts – Specialist**

**Winner: Henderson TR Pacific Investment Trust plc**

Last year's runners up, Henderson TR Pacific Investment Trust plc, was the clear winner this year. The report and accounts had a detailed and easy to read performance breakdown. The judges were also impressed by the in-depth look at the trust's portfolio and the performances of the largest holdings.

**Runner-up: Harbourvest Global Private Equity Limited**

This very comprehensive report and accounts provided lots of useful detail for keen investors. The clear tables and in-depth explanation of the management process provided a high degree of information and there was also a good summary of the key issues within the Chairman's statement.

**Best Report & Accounts – VCTs****Winner: Baronsmead VCT 3 plc**

Judges found this report and accounts interesting and informative, with clear objectives and a straightforward statement from the Chairman. Details of new and underlying holdings were viewed positively as was the addition of investor case studies.

**Runner-up: Octopus Titan VCT 1 PLC**

The presentation of this report and accounts was deemed very investor-friendly and clear to read. The branding of the company came across very well and was thought to be well aligned with an audience of younger investors.

**Best Newsletter****Winner: The Bulletin – Aberdeen managed investment companies**

Also last year's winners, the Aberdeen newsletter contained a wide range of insightful and well written articles, providing great coverage of different sectors and topical issues. It was well presented with an equally polished online version.

**Runner-up: The Investment Trust Magazine from Baillie Gifford**

The readability of this newsletter made it runner-up for the second year in a row. The variety of articles and content made it a well branded product, perfectly placed to appeal to retail investors.

### **Best Factsheet**

Once again this was a closely fought category, with the judges finding little to differentiate the front-runners.

### **Winner: SVM UK Active Fund plc**

Last year's runner up took the top spot due to the clear layout and high level of detail contained in their factsheet. This was supplemented by additional information on historic gearing levels and sector splits.

### **Runner-up: Martin Currie Investment Trusts**

The judges considered the Martin Currie factsheets collectively, due to their identical formats. A good quarterly summary along with a strong overview of the investment process impressed the judges.

### **Best Website**

#### **Winner: Aberdeen Investment Trust Centre**

Aberdeen's site was a clear winner for the sixth year running. The website was praised for its up-to-date flow of information including fund manager interviews and videos. Overall this website was very accessible and easy to use.

#### **Runner-up: Witan Wealthbuilder**

Witan's attractive and extremely clear site differentiated it from other investment companies in the judge's minds. It contained an impressive level of up-to-date information and required the least number of 'clicks' to access important information.

**Charles Cade, Investment Companies Research, Numis Securities** said: "My role as Chairman of the AIC's judging panel has impressed upon me the quality and breadth of

information that is available to private investors and the huge amount of thought that goes into shareholder communications. I have been particularly impressed this year by innovations made to improve both the clarity of information and the way that it is delivered to investors.”

**Ian Sayers, Director General, Association of Investment Companies (AIC)** said:

“These awards really set the industry benchmark for excellent communications to shareholders. In the report and accounts entries, the panel's attention to the Chairman and Manager reports illustrate that it is the personal touch that can really distinguish the best of breed. Investment companies which excel at communication allow investors the opportunity to know what the board and the manager are thinking as well as providing consistently useful information and data.

“The increasing importance of online communication means that the best website award is a particularly competitive category. Congratulations to Aberdeen Asset Managers on winning six years in a row in this category – a very impressive achievement.”

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**Notes to Editors**

The Association of Investment Companies was founded in 1932 to represent the interests of the investment trust industry – the oldest form of collective investment. Today, the AIC represents a broad range of closed ended investment companies, incorporating investment trusts and other closed ended investment companies and VCTs. The AIC's members believe that the industry is best served if it is united and speaks with one voice. The AIC's mission statement is to help Members add value for shareholders over the longer term. The AIC has 345 members and the industry has total assets of approximately £89.1 billion.