



AlphaScreens: finding dividend diamonds

25 November 2021

Investment companies still score on yield

Dividends are an important source of returns and also a useful valuation measure that can be used to identify shares with the potential for capital growth. But it's important to screen out potential value traps when using yield as a guide

Comment by Alpha editor:

In the depths of the pandemic when many companies were slashing dividends to shareholders, investment companies were notable for protecting their payouts. That is controversial because that can mean paying dividends out of capital. This aspect of so-called reserve management has the opportunity cost of diminishing the powder stores investment companies have to top up holdings and it means missing out on compounding total returns over the longer term.

Still, for many investors who rely on income from shares, investment companies' commitment to returning cash has been a boon. Also, a counter argument to slashing dividends, is that had investment companies gone down this route their share prices would have fallen by more - potentially widening the discount to net asset value (NAV) to an uncomfortable level for managers and existing shareholders.

Now, many investment companies are still scoring very well on our Alpha dividend yield screens. Although the pandemic is far from over, they remain very good fund structures to play the potential recovery, with the kicker of a dividend.

Impact Healthcare Reit (IHR), a property investment company focussing on residential and nursing care homes, tops our FTSE All Share screen. Reits must pay out ninety per cent of their rental profits as income, and IHR offers a yield of over five per cent according to our FactSet data. The income is attractive but on the valuation front, potential investors might want to consider that the premium its share price trades at to NAV has widened again in the last two months.



Dividends are crucial for UK investors

Investors neglect dividends at their peril. Over the 25 years to the end of 2019, the average annual return from the FTSE All-Share based on share price alone stood at 4.15 per cent, compared with a 7.4 per cent total return once dividends are factored in. And the benefit of reinvesting dividends over the long term makes the difference even more pronounced, with the 25-year cumulative total return from the FTSE All-Share standing at 497 per cent, compared with 176 per cent ignoring dividends. As well as providing income, a good yield can suggest a company has attractive qualities that could support share price performance, and a robust dividend record can indicate a company in good financial health with a strong and stable business.

Large-cap dividend diamonds criteria

Our large-cap screen is tilted towards companies that show signs of having stable prospects associated with dividend staying power. To help assess this, we use a measure of historic share price volatility against the wider market, called beta. Betas of below one indicate that a stock has been less sensitive to market movements and suggest it could boast some defensive qualities. The large-cap Alpha dividend yield screen is conducted on all FTSE All-Share stocks using the following criteria:

- A dividend yield higher than the median (mid-rank) average of all dividend-paying shares screened.
- Dividend covered at least twice by earnings.
- Earnings growth forecast in each of the next two financial years (i.e. dividend cover is not expected to dramatically fall).
- Operating cash conversion of 100 per cent or more (i.e. earnings are being turned into cash with which to pay dividends).
- Interest payments covered at least five times by operating profits (i.e. interest payments on borrowings are not likely to be a significant threat to maintaining dividend cover).
- Return on equity of 12.5 per cent or more (i.e. an indicator that the business may be of decent quality [if the interest cover test is also met, it suggests high returns on equity are not overly dependent on high debt levels]).
- A beta of 0.75 or lower.
- No dividend cut in the past three years.

Not many stocks pass such a stringent list of criteria. The ones that pass all the tests are listed at the top of the table, followed by those failing one test, then those failing two tests as detailed in the 'Tests passed' column. All stocks must pass the dividend yield test to





feature in the table that follows. Special dividends are included in the yield calculation used by the screen, and where a special dividend has been paid, it is highlighted in the table's 'Special dividend' column. While the primary ranking of the stocks is based on the number of tests they pass, inside each of these groupings, stocks are ordered according to their attractiveness based on a combination of dividend yield and dividend cover.

Small-cap dividend diamonds criteria

The small-cap Alpha dividend yield screen is more growth-focused than our large-cap screen. It is conducted separately on the FTSE All-Small and FTSE Aim All-Share indices, with the results presented in two separate tables. While the screen's dividend yield test is more aggressive than the one used by our large-cap screen, the lower average yields from small-caps mean little difference in the absolute level of yield both screens require. The screen uses the following criteria:

- A dividend yield among the top third of all dividend-paying shares screened.
- Dividend covered at least one-and-a-half times by earnings.
- Earnings growth forecast in each of the next two financial years and average growth of 5 per cent or more (i.e. rising earnings to support dividend growth and maintain or improve dividend cover).
- Positive free cash flow (i.e. a weak test that earnings are turned into cash with which to pay dividends).
- Interest payments covered at least five times by operating profits (i.e. interest payments on borrowings are not likely to be a significant threat to maintaining dividend cover).
- A three-year compound annual dividend growth rate of 5 per cent or more.
- A three-year compound annual earnings growth rate of 5 per cent or more.
- A market capitalisation of more than £10m (i.e. not severely illiquid).

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Stock screen and methodology by Algy Hall



Bloomsbury Publishing

Grafton

Tesco

Morgan Sindall

TI Fluid Systems

BMY

£298m

GFTU £2.889m

MGNS £1.118m

TIFS £1,215m

TSCO £21,571m

365p

1.207p

2,410p

281p

FTSE All-Share dividend diamonds (passing at least 6 out of 8 tests) Mkt Fwd EPSgrth EPSgrth 3-mth Net cash/ Special Tests passed Test Name TIDM cap Price NTMPE DY failed div (out of 8) Impact Healthcare REIT IHR £417m 119p 16 5.3% 12.2% 15.9% 1.5% NO 8 na SKG £10.076m 15 3.2% 8.7% 20.8% -7.1% -1.190m NO Smurfit Kappa Group 3.890p na 8 Apax Global Alpha Ltd. APAX £1.120m 228n - 49% 5.8% /Ew/dEPSGrth/ NO VPC Specialty Lending Inv. VSL - 8.3% 8.5% /FwdEPSGrth/ £267m 96p NO Blackrock World Mining Trust BRWM £1,040m 566p 3.9% -1.6% /FwdEPSGrth/ NO 10 12.5% -67.0% 32.3% -40.6% CMC Markets CMCX 245p /FwdEPSGrth/ NO £713m Ferrexpo FXPO £1.699m 289n 424.8% 94.2% -54.3% -23.9% -19m /FwdFPSGrth/ NO Rio Tinto RIO £58,881m 4,718p 710.4% 80.4% -35.3% -12.8% 1,061m /FwdEPSGrth/ NO Polymetal Int'l POLY £6,348m 7 7.2% -0.9% 14.2% -12.2% /FwdEPSGrth/ 93p 11 5.4% -13.2% 6.1% /FwdEPSGrth/ CEY £1,081m -6.5% 160m NO Centamin 7.7% Norcros NXR £250m 309p 9 3.7% 10.2% 4.3% -76m /DivGrth/ NO Wincanton WIN £448m 360p 9 29% 7.8% 12.3% -10.2% -330m /DivGrth/ NO DVO £364m 218p 12 4.2% 4.9% 5.8% -3.1% -33m /DivGrth/ NO 12.4% Dunelm DNLM £2,765m 19 7.3% 5.5% 3.4% -107m /DivCov/ NO 1,361p B&M Furo, Value Retail SA BMF £6.148m 16 2.9% -1.0% /FwdFPSGrth/ 614p -13.0% 7.8% -513m NO Burberry BRBY £7.702m 1,902p 21 2.8% 25.5% 14.9% 2.6% 559m /DivGrth/ NO MNDI £8,728m 1,798p 13 2.9% 17.2% -12.4% /EPSGrth/ Mondi 5.5% -893m NO DCC DCC £5,712m 5.792p 14 2.8% 8.2% 3.8% -5.3% -1,210m /EPSGrth/ NO - 2.9% /FwdEPSGrth/ **GDWN** £276m - 10.6% Goodwin 3.585p NO Blackrock Latin American Inv. Trust /EwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ BRI A £129m 328n - 64% -9.5% NO 6 Invesco Asia Trust IAT £241m 360p - 4.2% 5.3% /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ NO Aberforth Split Level Inc. Trust - 3.7% ASIT £156m 82p -3.6% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ TFIF TwentyFour Income Fund Ltd GBP £643m - 5.6% 1.8% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ 114p NO JPMorgan Asia Growth & Inc. JAGI £448m 459p - 3.9% 2.0% /FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ NO 6 8.6% Imperial Brands IMB £15,303m 1,617p 6.2% 6.1% -9.521m /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO Law Debenture Corp **LWDB** £967m 3.6% -1.1% /FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ - 3.6% -0.5% Utilico Emerging Mrkts Trust UEM £468m /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ 214p NO Henderson Int'l Income Trust HINT £333m 170p - 3.7% 1.2% /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ NO Murray Income Trust MUT £1,066m 912p - 3.8% -1.5% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO Invesco Select Trust UK Eq. GBP - 3.4% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ **IVPU** £151m 196p 6.5% NO North American Income Trust GBP Ord.Shs NAIT £403m 286р 3.6% 2.1% /FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ NO JPMorgan Euro, Invest, Trust-Income-Class JETI - 2.8% £137m 160p 1.9% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO Henderson Diversified Income Trust **HDIV** £157m 84p - 5.3% -3.0% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ Montanaro UK Smaller Cos Inv. Trust MTU £273m 3.4% -7.0% 163p NO IG Group Holdings IGG £3,317m 769p 10 5.6% 12.4% -16.9% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO ASHM £2,204m 14 5.5% 9.2% -19.8% Ashmore Group 309p -35.9% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO Sequoia Eco. Infrastr. Inc. Fund Ptg.Shs GBP SEQI £1,682m 107p - 5.8% -6.1% /FwdFPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO **AEWUK REIT** AEWU £183m 115p 6.9% 11.6% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO 25.8% Kingfishe KGF £6,865m 328p 10 3.7% -15.0% -7.6% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO 5 2.8% /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ 3i Group plc III £13,834m 1,422p 64.6% -25.2% 7.5% NO RDW £2.314m 7 3.7% 22.3% 2.1% -5.1% -607m Redrow 657p /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ NO 564p **BAE Systems** BA £17.885m 11 4.3% 0.6% 8.5% -1.4% -6,426m /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO TR Property Inv. Trust Ord Shares Class GBP TRY £1,563m 2.9% 493p -1.3% /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ BBH £1,079m 2.9% -0.1% BB Healthcare Trust 193p NO BWY £3,997m 8 3.6% 10.0% 7.3% /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ Bellway 3,239p -5.5% -612m NO PRSRFIT PRSR £555m 101p 26 4.0% 199.4% 21.7% -2.9% /DivGrth/IntCov/ NO STVG 8 2.8% 11.7% -4.2% /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ STV £161m 345p 2.3% NO Taylor Wimpey TW £5,858m 161p 8 5.2% 173.7% 7.2% -10.1% -188m /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ NO SFR £218m 9 4.1% 12.0% -12.4% /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ Severfield 70p 14.8% -60m NO Target Healthcare REIT THRI f742m 120p 18 56% 15.6% 127% -18% /FPSGrth/DivCov/ NO BHP £42,579m -835m BHP 2,016p 911.1% 5.3% -24.8% -9.8% /FwdEPSGrth/DivCov/ NO Vistry VTY £2,538m 1,142p 8 3.5% 138.1% 14.4% -7.9% -625m /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ NO

19 5.1%

16 2.9%

12 2.9% 106.8%

10 3.2% 544.1%

13 3.3% 173.3%

-1.5%

42.6%

4.0%

-23m

-178m

-578m

-12,022m

8.2%

-6.9% -7.8%

-6.6% -3.4%

4.5% 11.7%

64.0% -24.4%

Continued...

NO

NO 6

NO

NO 6

/FwdEPSGrth/DivCov/

/FwdFPSGrth/FPSGrth/

/FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/

/EPSGrth/IntCov/

/EPSGrth/IntCov/





		Mkt		Fwd			EPS grth		Net cash/		Special	Tests passed
Name	TIDM	сар	Price	NTMPE	DY	FY+1	FY+2	mom.	debt(-) in £	failed	div	(out of 8)
Rathbone Brothers	RAT	£1,163m	1,876p	11	3.9%	24.4%	6.1%	-5.3%	-	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
XPS Pensions	XPS	£300m	146p	14	4.6%	4.4%	6.8%	0.7%	-	/DivGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
LXIREIT	LXI	£1,071m	153p	19	3.6%	1.8%	11.4%	3.9%	1-2	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Hargreaves Lansdown	HL	£6,835m	1,441p	26	3.5%	-13.9%	8.9%	-4.2%	-	/FwdEPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Domino's Pizza	DOM	£1,638m	364p	17	3.3%	12.0%	3.2%	-11.6%	-68m	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
FDM	FDM	£1,247m	1,142p	32	3.8%	9.1%	14.4%	-10.5%	29m	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Clarkson	CKN	£1,129m	3,710p	27	2.9%	31.6%	0.5%	0.8%	27m	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
HomeServe	HSV	£3,119m	927p	18	2.8%	14.1%	12.3%	1.1%	-365m	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Source: FactSet, 25 November 2021												

FTSE All-Small dividend diamonds (passing at least 6 out of 8 tests) Fwd NTM Mkt EPSerth EPSerth 3-mth Net cash/ Tests passed Test Special Name TIDM Cap Price DY mom. debt(-)in£ Impact Healthcare REIT 119p IHR £417m 16 5.3% 12.2% 15.9% NO Chelverton UK Dividend Trust GBP 4.7% -9.5% /FwdEPSGrth/ SDV £45m 215p NO /FwdEPSGrth/ 8.5% VPC Specialty Lending Investments VSI £267m 96p 8.3% NO 7 DVO £364m 218p 12 4.2% 4.9% 5.8% -3.1% /DivGrth/ NO Blackrock Latin American Inv. Trust 6.4% /FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ BRLA £129m 328p NO 6 - /FwdEPSGrth/FCF/ IAT 4.2% 5.3% Invesco Asia Trust £241m 360p NO 6 4.4% 654.7% 53.4% 16.9% Premier Miton Global Renewables Trust GBP PMGR £36m 197p NO 6 - /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ - 5.6% TwentyFour Income Fund Ltd GBP TFIF £643m 114p 1.8% NO 6 Shires Income GBP SHRS £83m 269p 4.9% -4.8% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO 6 - - 11.6% - /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ AEWU £183m **AEWUK REIT** 6.9% 115p NO 6 RMII £106m 90p HDIV £157m 01 - - -0.6% - - -30% RM Infrastructure Income GBP - /FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/ 7.3% NO 6 Henderson Diversified Inc. Trust 5.3% /FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/ NO 6 18 5.6% 15.6% 12.7% -1.8% THRL £742m Target Healthcare REIT 120p /EPSGrth/DivCov/ NO 6 19 5.1% 9 4.1% /FwdEPSGrth/DivCov/ Bloomsbury Publishing BMY £298m 365p -1.5% 8.2% 4.0% -23m NO 6 14.8% SFR /DivGrth/EPSGrth/ 12.0% -12.4% 70p Severfield £218m -60m NO 6 14 4.6% /DivGrth/DivCov/ XPS Pensions XPS £300m 146p 4.4% 6.8% 0.7% NO 6 Source: FactSet, 25 November 2021

Name	TIDM	Mkt Cap	Price	Fwd NTM PE	DY	EPS grth FY+1	EPS grth FY+2	3-mth mom.	Net cash/ debt(-) in £	Test Failed	Special div	Tests passed (out of 8)
Caledonia Mining Corp.	CMCL	£118m	20110100000		3.2%	8.0%	47.7%	18.3%	7m	na	NO	8
Springfield Properties	SPR	£151m	148p	9	3.9%	5.7%	15.0%	-4.2%	-71m	na	NO	8
Michelmersh Brick	MBH	£121m	127p	15	2.9%	69.7%	3.6%	-10.6%	-2m	na	NO	8
Sylvania Platinum	SLP	£242m	89p	3	4.5%	-5.7%	11.0%	0.9%	67m	/FwdEPSGrth/	NO	7
Warehouse REIT C	WHR	£714m	168p	25	3.7%	18.2%	11.9%	4.7%	-	/IntCov/	NO	7
Alumasc	ALU	£82m	228p	9	4.2%	1.2%	6.8%	4.6%	-19m	/FwdEPSGrth/	NO	7
Polar Capital	POLR	£808m	806p	12	5.0%	-5.0%	20.6%	-8.2%	-	/FwdEPSGrth/	NO	7
Belvoir	BLV	£91m	245p	13	3.7%	35.6%	-5.1%	-18.5%	-	/FwdEPSGrth/	NO	7
Steppe Cement	STCM	£101m	46p	8	7.6%	46.9%	4.5%	-14.0%	-3m	/DivCov/	NO	7
Pan African Resources	PAF	£350m	18p	5	3.7%	15.3%	9.0%	12.4%	-51m	/DivGrth/EPSGrth/	NO	6
Hargreaves Services	HSP	£147m	456p	11	4.2%	-36.3%	-9.7%	-17.1%	-33m	/FwdEPSGrth/IntCov/	NO	6
H&T	HAT	£110m	276p	-	3.6%	-	-	-8.3%	18m	/FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/	NO	6
Atalaya Mining	ATYM	£569m	412p	6	7.1%	302.4%	-13.5%	30.4%	-77m	/FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/	NO	6
Anglo Asian Mining	AAZ	£128m	112p	9	5.2%	-28.8%	21.4%	-13.8%	14m	/FwdEPSGrth/DivGrth/	NO	6
RBG Holdings	RBGP	£108m	113p	11	4.4%	5.1%	38.4%	-17.5%	8m	/DivGrth/EPSGrth/	NO	6
M.P. Evans	MPE	£481m	880p	15	3.1%	184.9%	-24.4%	23.2%	-32m	/FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/	NO	6
iEnergizer	IBPO	£610m	321p	11	5.1%	35.1%	22.8%	10.3%	11m	/DivGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Property Franchise	TPFG	£84m	263p	10	4.0%	42.4%	8.9%	-16.0%	-	/EPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Argentex	AGFX	£104m	92p	9	3.0%	33.9%	36.7%	-5.3%	-	/DivGrth/EPSGrth/	NO	6
Concurrent Technologies	CNC	£56m	76p	16	3.4%	25.3%	-	-15.1%	8m	/FwdEPSGrth/EPSGrth/	NO	6
Jarvis Securities	JIM	£132m	295p		4.4%	-	-	-5.6%	-	/FwdEPSGrth/DivCov/	NO	6
Xpediator	XPD	£72m	51p	11	3.0%	11.5%	6.2%	-26.6%	-63m	/EPSGrth/FCF/	NO	6
Source: FactSet, 25 November 202	21											



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