AUGUST 2026

THE ONLINE MONTHLY FOR THE ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENT MARKET

AIM JOURNAL

AIM 50 continues to outperform AIM

AIM took another dip in July with a 1.25% decline and the FTSE AIM 100 index fell by 1.4%. In contrast, the FTSE AIM UK 50 index, which is focused on UK companies, is outperforming again with a 1.9% increase. Both the FTSE 100 and FTSE All Share index were around 3.5% higher. The one index that sharply underperformed AIM was the FTSE Fledgling, which dropped 10.8%, due to slumps in floorcoverings distributor Headlam and film and video equipment supplier Videndum after poor trading statements.

A bid for Gooch & Housego has boosted the performance of the AIM 50. Arlington Capital Partners (ACP) has agreed a bid of 1230p/share in cash for the photonics company. Shareholders will retain the 4.9p/share interim dividend. This values Gooch & Housego at £345.6m. ACP believes that growth can be accelerated with greater financial backing.

There have also been sharp recoveries in share prices of recent poor performers. The post interims bounce back continues for RWS Holdings, which has acquired Acogroup, which supplies language and content services under the Acolad brand, for an enterprise value of £22.4m. This will increase exposure to France and other European countries and provide cross-selling potential.

Oil company 1947 set for AIM

It has been reported that 1947 Oil and Gas is planning to raise £50m and join AIM. The company's website (www.1947plc.com) has a password protected pre-IPO presentation and the flotation has been confirmed for August. The expected market capitalisation is £64m.

The company was incorporated on 4 March 2026 and recently the accounting period was changed from March 2027 to December 2026. The initial share issues were predominantly at 8p each, although some were issued at par value of 1p. The flotation share price is anticipated to be 10p.

The company already has a potential acquisition lined up and this could cost $65m. The target has 2P net reserves of 19.7 MMboe, which equates to a PV10 of $346m before tax and abandonment costs. This business has established management. The cash generated by the assets would fund dividends and a maiden dividend is planned for 2027.

President and founder Ivan Murphy founded Cove Energy, which was acquired for $1.5bn, and has experience of the London markets and acquisitions. Executive chairman Tim Duncan was the founder of Talos Energy.

The name of the company is inspired by the commencement of modern offshore drilling in 1947. That was when the Kermac No. 16 well became the first well drilled out of sight of land using a fixed offshore platform.

In this issue

02 GENERAL NEWS
Ionic plans AIM float

03 ADVISERS
VSA client boost

04 NEWS
NWF food prospects

06 NEWS
BRCK restructures

07 DIVIDENDS
Restore progress

08 FEATURE
AIM rules consultation

09 FEATURE
AIM liquidity improves

11 STATISTICS
Market indices and statistics

Ionic Rare Earths pre-AIM cash

ASX-listed Ionic Rare Earths has raised $8m in a placing at $0.26/share with institutional investors ahead of a proposed AIM flotation. The previous closing share price was $0.31. The cash will be spent on developing rare earth recycling projects and a rare earth mine in Uganda. There is an integrated strategy for producing sustainable and traceable magnet and heavy rare earths.

Argentem Creek Partners invested $2m in the placing and Ionic Rare Earths directors have invested $500,000. Ionic Rare Earths will require more cash to finance its plans, and it wants to add an AIM-quotation to its ASX listing to gain access to more investors. The company has already been able to demonstrate that it can supply e-motor magnets.

Belfast-based subsidiary Ionic Technologies is developing a technology from Queen's University Belfast. This involves separation, recycling and refining of magnet rare earths. A commercial sized facility is planned in Belfast. Viridion is a 50/50 joint venture that has the rights to the magnet recycling technology IP in Brazil.

There is also the 60%-owned Makuutu rare earths project in Uganda, which is an ionic adsorption clay deposit that could have a life of more than 50 years. This is an area with existing infrastructure, so the capital expenditure requirements are relatively low. Discussions continue with potential offtakers so that project development can be accelerated.

More than $5m of the cash is set aside for acquiring land, gaining planning approvals and developing the Belfast facility. Due diligence is being undertaken with potential strategic investors in the facility.

CyanConnode recommends

CyanConnode is recommending a 10.165p/share in cash from Esyasoft, valuing the smart utilities technology company at £36.5m. This is lower than the previous indicative offer of 10.44p/share. The original indicative offer of 9.75p/share was announced in January. Esyasoft is already a major player in smart grid technology, and it bought Good Energy. Esyasoft has a 12-year relationship with CyanConnode and has provided $20.25m of convertible loans. An attraction of CyanConnode is its technology and relationships with utilities and regulators, particularly in India. Esyasoft believes that its greater financial strength will help CyanConnode to grow more quickly and there are cross-selling opportunities.

Brave Bison launches System1 bid

Marketing company Brave Bison launched a bid for fellow AIM-quoted System1 Group, which valued the market research technology and services provider at £43.1m, or 327p/share, when it was announced. System1 has rejected the bid saying that it is not a fair valuation. The Brave Bison share price has dropped to 88.5p from 91.5p at the time of the bid. This means the bid value has dipped to 315.5p/share. The System1 share price was 325p at the end of July, so this offer currently represents a discount to the market price.

The bid is 135p in cash and 2.04 Brave Bison shares for every System1 share. There is also an all-share bid of 3.36 Brave Bison shares for each System1 share. It appears that shareholders would still receive the 6p/share final dividend payable on 19 October with an ex-dividend date of 24 September.

Brave Bison already owns 28% of System1 bought from founder John Kearon, who now owns 8.7% of Brave Bison, and an institutional investor for an average cost of 242p/share. That means that the true cost of acquiring the business will be less than £40m. Also, System1 had net cash of £12.4m at the end of March 2026. Brave Bison had net cash of £4.3m at the end of 2025.

There were previous indicative offers from Brave Bison. The original offer was valued at 297p/share and that was followed up with a 327p/share offer. The level of cash in the bid has been increased.

System1 was expected to report a 2026-27 pre-tax profit of £4.18m, which is equivalent to 14 times prospective earnings at the bid value. The combined business would have pro forma revenues of £79m, while underlying EBITDA could be £14m. There should be cost savings achievable by Brave Bison that would boost that profit. No shareholders have committed to accepting the bid.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

VSA Capital loss increases, but clients added

Broker and investment bank VSA Capital reported a higher loss in the year to March 2026 with some deals delayed. However, the retained corporate clients rose from 30 to 37. Some of the clients of the Aquis-quoted adviser are on AIM, but there others on the Main Market, Aquis and TSX Venture Exchange.

There have been significant fundraisings for AIM companies Aurrigo International, Invinity Energy Systems and Star Energy. Investors from India were brought into the first two companies. The cash was raised for Star Energy after the financial year end. Resources and cleantech are core sectors for VSA Capital.

In the year to March 2026, revenues fell from £2.78m to £2.42m, while the reported pre-tax loss increased from £8,000 to £641,000. That was despite a gain on investments of £108,000, compared with a loss of £47,000 in the previous year. Investments are valued at £607,000 and net cash was £430,000 at the end of March 2026.

Research fees grew from £76,000 to £82,000. Corporate finance and broking fees were both lower. Wage costs were flat at around £1.5m, but overall administration costs rose from £2.65m to £3.07m.

VSA Capital says it believes that AIM requires rejuvenation. It argues that it has international clients that would join the junior market if they believed it were worthwhile.

■ According to the latest report by Adviser Rankings the number of companies in the FTSE AIM 100 index audited by one of the big four accountancy firms - PwC, KPMG, EY and Deloitte – is reducing. They audited 30 of the companies at the time of the latest survey. Back in April 2021, PwC itself audited 22 of the companies and the big four audited a total of 58 companies.

■ **Impax Asset Management** has been helped by strong markets and third quarter assets under management were 4.4% higher than the previous quarter at £23.3bn. Cavendish has raised its forecast assets under management at the end of the year by 12% to £23.3bn. The expected net outflow is similar to before with positive performance sparking the upgrade. The full year pre-tax profit forecast has been raised 7% to £22.2m, while next year's forecast jumps 28% to £24.1m.

■ Fund manager **Polar Capital** increased assets under management by 47% to £45bn, helped by net inflows of £2.5bn and investment returns of £11.1bn. Even so, Deutsche Bank cut its share price target from 1,300p to 1,200p, while retaining the buy recommendation.

■ Assets under management with **Premier Miton Group** declined from £10.3bn to £8.6bn over the nine months to June 2026. The fall in the latest quarter was £362m with positive performance partly offsetting £837m of net outflows. Annualised cost savings are being made. The business remains cash generative.

■ **Mello London** is being held on Tuesday 17 November and Wednesday 18 November at The Clayton Hotel & Conference Centre, Chiswick. There

ADVISER CHANGES - JULY 2026

COMPANY	NEW BROKER	OLD BROKER	NEW NOMAD	OLD NOMAD	DATE
Crystal Amber Fund Ltd	Canaccord Genuity	Winterflood	Canaccord Genuity	Allenby	7/1/2026
James Cropper	Singer	Shore	Singer	Shore	7/6/2026
Goldstone Resources	Strand Hanson	SP Angel	Strand Hanson	Strand Hanson	7/6/2026
Mkango Resources Ltd	Cavendish / Hannam & Partners / SP Angel	Alternative Resource Capital / Hannam & Partners / SP Angel	SP Angel	SP Angel	7/9/2026
Team	Zeus	Strand Hanson	Strand Hanson	Strand Hanson	7/10/2026
Poolbeg Pharma	Oak Securities / Cavendish / Shore / Davy	Cavendish/ Shore / Davy	Cavendish	Cavendish	7/14/2026
accesso Technology	Shore / Deutsche Numis	Deutsche Numis	Deutsche Numis	Deutsche Numis	7/29/2026
boohoo Group	Peel Hunt / Zeus / Panmure Liberum	Zeus / Panmure Liberum	Zeus	Zeus	7/31/2026
Invinity Ebergy Systems	Panmure Liberum / Canaccord Genuity / VSA	Canaccord Genuity / VSA	Canaccord Genuity	Canaccord Genuity	7/31/2026

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

NWF focuses on potential for national UK food distribution network

Fuel, food and feed distributor *www.nwf.co.uk*

Fuels did better in the fourth quarter due to oil price volatility caused by the conflict in the Middle East and there was an improved performance in the food distribution division, but **NWF** still reported a dip in underlying 2025-26 pre-tax profit. Food distribution provides a significant growth opportunity.

Food distribution increased its profit contribution by 19% to £5.1m. The number of pallets stored improved to 165,000, which is broadly equivalent to full capacity. Even so, new clients are being sought as NWF plans to expand outside of the North West and become a national distributor. This could be done via acquisition or opening new sites.

Net cash was £9m

NWF (NWF)			139.5p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	-17.7	MARKET CAP £M	69.2

The business has a niche as larger distributors concentrate on the larger ambient grocery customers. Having warehouses in other parts of the country will enable NWF to offer a more efficient service and attract new business.

In the year to May 2026, NWF revenues were 2% ahead at £920.3m, after higher interest charges relating to new vehicle leases, while pre-tax profit fell from £13.2m to £12.5m. Net cash was £9m at the end of May 2026 and the dividend is 4% higher at 8.7p/share.

Fuels continues to refine its strategy and acquired two fuel distributors. The profit contribution slipped from £8.4m to £8.1m. Feeds managed to maintain its profit at £3.6m despite a decline in the milk price because of excess milk production.

This year pre-tax profit is likely to be flat, but this will depend on what happens in the Middle East. Investment in the food distribution business may take time to show through in profitability, particularly if a new site has to build up its usage levels. Cash in the bank and a debt facility provide the funding required for this investment.

SDI Group continues acquisition strategy

Scientific instruments *www.sdigroup.com*

SDI Group has a strong track record acquiring scientific instruments businesses and it has bought 21 businesses during its time on AIM. Except for a few bolt-on buys the individual businesses tend to remain independent, while encouraging interaction and cross-selling.

In the year to April 2026, revenues rose 13% to £74.5m with organic growth of 5%. Underlying pre-tax profit improved 17% to £9.9m. Cash generated covered some of the acquisition costs during the year, but there was still a £10m increase in net debt to £24m.

SDI GROUP (SDI)			91p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	+6.6	MARKET CAP £M	95.2

The greatest organic growth was in the industrial and scientific sensors division. There was also an initial contribution from PRP Optoelectronics, which manufactures ruggedised LED arrays and LED micro technology. PRP was acquired for £9.3m and had an operating profit of £1.54m in 2025. PRP supplies a range of sectors, including defence and aerospace.

Laboratory equipment generated organic growth of 5% and there was a £1.8m initial contribution from Severn Thermal, which makes furnaces and environmental chambers for advanced material testing. The industrial and scientific products division revenues would have been flat if not for full year contributions from past acquisitions, but margins improved.

Pre-tax profit is forecast to rise to £11.2m. The shares are trading on less than 12 times prospective earnings. Net debt could fall to £17.5m by April 2027, although more acquisitions mean that the outcome is likely to be higher. SDI pays cash for acquisitions and feels that the share price is currently too low to make share issues attractive.

Zoo Digital receiving increasing interest from global television streamers

Digital and media services *www.zoodigital.com*

ZOO DIGITAL (ZOO)			10.75p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	-18.9	MARKET CAP £M	10.6

Media localisation and services provider **Zoo Digital** is seeing signs of improvement in the TV and film market for localisation and dubbing. Approaches from customers for framework agreements are becoming more frequent and Zoo Digital is moving into new areas such as live sport. Restructuring the business has helped to reduce costs and enhance margins.

Full year revenues declined from $49.6m to $42.3m. There was some catching up in the previous year after the strikes in Hollywood. Streaming companies are getting back to past levels of programming and diversifying into new areas, such as live sport. That is providing potential areas of growth for Zoo Digital.

The loss was reduced from $8.3m to $2.3m. That excludes write-downs on joint ventures. Reduced fixed costs and investment in AI have helped to improve efficiency and move the business nearer to breakeven. The operations generated enough cash to more than cover investment in technology to maintain the competitive lead of the business.

AI helps to improve efficiency

The market is highly fragmented, but Zoo Digital's relative size and global reach is attractive to TV and film clients. More work is being done in India. Quality of service, speed and capacity are important. A new Fast Track service has been launched for live and near-live events and this boosted subtitling work. Dubbing can be done in 24 hours rather than four or five weeks and subtitling can take three hours.

The trading improvement has continued into the first quarter of this financial year. Canaccord Genuity still expects a small loss for 2026-27. Cash generation should cover capitalised development costs, but the year-end net debt is likely to still be around $2m. Zoo Digital believes that it can continue to add market share and that should enable it to become consistently profitable.

ActiveOps accelerates annualised recurring revenues

Operations software *www.activeops.com*

ACTIVEOPS (AOM)			205p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	+20.6	MARKET CAP £M	146.5

Productivity optimisation software provider **ActiveOps** had a strong year to March 2026. Net retained revenues were 119%, supplementing the nine new business wins. On top of this £7.5m was received for the WorkiQ trademark from Microsoft, which further boosted the cash pile, which was £23.8m at the end of March 2026.

Annualised recurring revenues increased from £28.4m to £41.5m, helped by the acquisition of competitor Enlighten last June. This purchase is helping to accelerate growth in North America. Organic growth in SaaS revenues was 23%. In the year to March 2026, revenues rose from £30.5m to £45m, while underlying pre-tax profit, excluding the WorkiQ gain, improved from £1.3m to £2.4m. The improvement in profit was after additional investment in sales.

The integration of Enlighten is ongoing and £3m of annual cost savings have already been identified. Canaccord Genuity forecasts an underlying pre-tax profit of £3.6m this year with a jump to £5.2m next year. Net cash could reach £31m by the end of March 2028, which is more than one-fifth of the market capitalisation. Cash generation will cover deferred payments for Enlighten.

There has been some profit taking that has hit the share price after its recent rise and it is down 11% since the beginning of the year. Octopus Investments increased its stake from 13.1% to 14.2% after the results. Octopus had less than 5% in February. ActiveOps is targeting annualised recurring revenues of £100m over the next five years and the increased scale will improve margins.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

BRCK hit be weak construction market and awaits signs of upturn

Building materials distributor *www.brckgroup.com*

Bricks and building materials distributor and installer **BRCK**, which was previously known as Brickability, improved profit and generated cash in a weak construction market. Any upturn in housebuilding and the general construction sector will provide a boost to profitability and a restructuring will also provide benefits over the next two or three years.

BRCK has been restructured into two divisions. The distribution division supplies bricks, timber, cladding, roof tiles and radiators. The design and install division provides procurement, specification, design and installation services. The group has grown through acquisition and there are 32 different businesses. Investment in software will make it easier to integrate these businesses and run them more efficiently.

BRCK has two divisions

In 2025-26, revenues were 1% ahead at £645.4m, while underlying pre-tax profit improved from £36.5m to £38.3m. Brick sales fell and cladding operations are still being hit by regulatory delays. The dividend is maintained at 3.51p/share. Net debt increased by 7% to £60.5m. That was after spending £14.5m on acquisitions and £11.3m on dividends.

Jacksons Fencing was acquired after the year end. It supplies security fencing and acoustic barriers. The initial consideration was £15m, plus £4.9m for freehold assets, and this helps to diversify the group. Annual revenues are £40m.

BRCK (BRCK)			51.4p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	-15.7	MARKET CAP £M	166.2

Earlier this year, BRCK rejected an unsolicited bid approach from Atlas Holdings LLC of 65p/share, which is well above the current share price. That indicated potential upside.

UK governments tend to talk about increasing housebuilding and if this finally comes to pass under new leadership, then BRCK will be a major beneficiary. Canaccord Genuity has edged down its 2026-27 pre-tax profit forecast from £36.6m to £35.5m. A recovery to £38.3m is expected next year. There is significant recovery potential and there are the benefits from the restructuring to come through. The shares are trading on just over six times forecast earnings.

MHA prospers in first year on AIM

Accountancy *www.mha.co.uk*

Accountancy firm MHA increased full year revenues 12% to £251.4m in its first year as a quoted company. Pre-tax profit was 2% ahead of forecast, which had previously been upgraded, at £39.2m. The medium-term target is annual revenues of more than £500m.

Investment in technology is helping to make the business more efficient. The dividend of 5.2p/share was covered 2.3 times by underlying earnings. Net cash was £25.4m at the end of March 2026.

All service offerings grew revenues. The customer base covers a wide range of sectors and billings increased in each of these sectors. The fastest growth was in the professional and financial services. There is also a change in mix towards higher margin work.

MHA (MHA)			138p
12 MONTH CHANGE %	-1.8	MARKET CAP £M	392

Last year there was an initial contribution to revenues by Baker Tilly South East Europe, which was acquired in August, of £12.9m. The purchase of MS UAE, which comprises the Moore Stephens audit and tax and consulting activities in the region, was completed early in the current financial year. The total cost is estimated to be £6.7m in cash and shares. This deal should be earnings enhancing in the first 12 months.

Cavendish edged up its 2026-27 pre-tax profit forecast to £42.3m, while a dividend of 5.6p/share is expected. Net cash could reach £28.5m by next March. The shares are trading on eleven times forecast earnings. The forecast yield is 4%. The cash can be used to fund further acquisitions along with share issues.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

Restore reaps benefits of restructuring

Business support services *www.restoreplc.com*

Dividend

Document management and business services provider Restore continually paid a dividend between 2011 and 2019, but it was stopped because of Covid. The total dividend when it restarted in 2021 was 7.2p/share – it was 6p/share in 2018. It rose to 7.4p/share in 2022 but was reduced to 5.2p/share in 2023 when profit dipped. It was rebuilt to 6.9p/share last year.

The latest interim dividend was raised from 2.2p/share to 2.6p/share. A total 2026 dividend of 8.1p/share is forecast, rising to 9.5p/share next year. These dividends are covered more than three times by earnings.

Business

Restore provides a wide range of business services, including information management, IT decommissioning, shredding and digital services. Restore has a strong market position in its core markets, particularly document storage. After disappointing the market Restore is back on track.

Restore sold its relocations business Harrow Green to Pickford's for up to £5.5m and that means that it can concentrate on its core operations which have better prospects.

The information management division is benefiting from consolidation of its storage properties. It has also won a new contract with the MoD.

The technology division was built up by acquisition last year, but the interim growth of 17% was all organic. Margins also improved as higher margin business has become the focus. There is further margin improvement being targeted.

In the first half of 2026, continuing revenues grew 21% through a combination of organic and acquired growth. Pre-tax profit was 23% ahead at £22.3m, which means that Restore is well on the way to achieving the 2026 forecasts.

RESTORE (RST)	
Price (p)	298
Market cap £m	394
Historical yield	2.3%
Prospective yield	2.7%

The main growth in full year operating profit will come from information management and technology, with the Datashred contribution set to be lower because of a fall in the recycled paper price. Singer forecasts a rise in underlying full year pre-tax profit from £40.6m to £47.8m. Next year, pre-tax profit could improve to £54.4m on a 4% rise in revenues to £349m.

Net debt is set to be £263m by the end of the year, after share buybacks, and it could fall to £244m by the end of 2027 assuming no other acquisitions. However, excluding leases the net debt would be £124m, falling to £98.4m next year.

Dan Baker is moving from finance director to chief executive at the end of the year, replacing Charles Skinner, who retook the reins in 2023 when the company underperformed. Charles Skinner will become non-executive chair. This does not appear to have concerned the market.

The shares are trading on less than 12 times prospective earnings, and it could fall to ten in 2027. There is potential for an upgrade for this year if trading continues at current levels. There is also scope for more acquisitions to enhance earnings in the longer-term.

Dividend news

Soft drinks maker **Nichols** reported interims ahead of guidance. Revenues grew from £85.5m to £89.5m, while underlying pre-tax profit edged up from £14.6m to £15m. Sales improved in the UK and internationally. As promised at the time of the 2025 results the dividend cover is being reduced to 1.5 times and the interim dividend is one-third higher at 20.2p/share. Net cash was £66.2m at the end of June 2026. Nichols is on course to achieve the 2026 pre-tax profit forecast of £35.1m, up from £33.6m. Investment in IT will continue to improve efficiency and help offset higher distribution costs. The forecast dividend is 48p/share.

Early sales of renewable assets and other one-off benefits boosted pre-tax profit at **Hargreaves Services** from £17.4m to £40.3m. The core services business also made a significant contribution to the profit increase. German associate HRMS improved its contribution. The dividend was raised to 40p/share. The lack of one-offs means that group pre-tax profit is set to decline to £17.8m this year. The 2026-27 dividend is forecast to rise to 41p/share. There are other assets that could be sold over the next few years to improve the cash position. Net cash could be £13.6m at year end, following the £20m tender offer.

Franchise Brands improved its interim figures even though there was no upturn in its core markets. System sales were 7% ahead at £229.2m despite weak B2C revenues. Filta benefited from higher used cooking oil prices as well as broadening its customer base. Pre-tax profit rose 8% to £12.6m. Net debt has been cut to £52.9m and that reduction should accelerate over the next couple of years, even without sales of non-core activities. Full year pre-tax profit is forecast to improve from £23.9m to £25m. The full year dividend is set to rise from 2.5p/share to 2.6p/share.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

AIM rule changes consultation response from the QCA

The QCA has published its response to rule changes proposed in AIM Notice 62 and focused on changes to Rule 26 and the proposed framework for proxy advisers.

The consultation for AIM rule changes closed in early July. The Quoted Companies Alliance (QCA) has published its thoughts on the proposals and is broadly in agreement with them. They should provide greater flexibility and help to attract companies to the junior market.

The QCA is keen that the changes result in a "clearer and more coherent rulebook". It wants guidance to be included alongside the relevant rule rather than in the back of the rulebook. The organisation also feels that there should be less ambiguity concerning the equal treatment of individual shareholders by encouraging companies to include them in fundraisings and the holding of online presentations.

> The QCA is keen that the changes result in a "clearer and more coherent rulebook".

It is hoped that the simplified admission rules will help to attract potential new companies to AIM. The market also wants to make it easier for companies with other quotations to join AIM.

The rules would allow special voting shares, but the QCA believes that there should be a defined time limit for these.

One of the ways that AIM could be made more flexible is the removal of the automatic classification of a reverse takeover purely on size and not forcing trading in the shares to be suspended automatically when there is a reverse takeover. This will make it easier and potentially cheaper to grow via acquisitions. The substantial transaction threshold is set to be raised from 10% to 25%.

AIM Rule 26

The QCA is pleased that there is a change in the emphasis of the rules from procedural compliance to proportionate disclosure based on five prescribed themes, but it thinks that it can be done in a more balanced way. The danger is that the change will not make investors expect any less disclosure, so there could be little difference.

The smaller company investors contacted by the QCA believe that the current changes could damage interaction with the companies and confidence in the market. The QCA argues that a company should be required to confirm it has considered a corporate governance code and the London Stock Exchange should clarify the continuing role of these codes.

The suggestion is that guidance should be included in the rules that emphasises the importance of good corporate governance and that a code should be referred to when making decisions on disclosure. This would be based on size and stage of development. "An AIM company should undertake this consideration with its nominated adviser and should be prepared to engage with shareholders on matters relating to its corporate governance arrangements generally., according to the QCA. It is hoped that this should provide greater clarity.

Proxy advisers

Proxy advisers provide research and advisory services for institutional shareholders. The coverage includes corporate governance and executive pay. The information provided is designed to help the shareholder make voting decisions when there is a meeting.

Back in 2024, research commissioned by the QCA showed that companies are unhappy with proxy advisers and the accuracy of their reports. They found them unresponsive if they tried to question them about voting recommendations and on occasion there are potential conflicts of interest.

There is inadequate accountability for proxy advisers. The problem is that AIM does not have much ability to put direct pressure on proxy advisers. The QCA wants AIM to use its influence with the Financial Reporting Council and the Financial Conduct Authority, which have more influence in this area.

AIM liquidity continues to improve

AIM trades continue to increase despite Main Market moves and takeovers reducing the number of companies.

The number of companies on AIM continues to fall, although it has been holding at just above 600 for a few months. The lack of new admissions is likely to lead to a decline below 600 this year, though. On the bright side, liquidity continues to improve.

As the largest company on AIM, Greatland Resources generated the greatest value of trades during June 2026

This is despite the fact that there were 647 companies with a market capitalisation of £68.4bn in June 2025. The AIM market capitalisation has subsequently fallen to £62.3bn.

In the first five months of 2026, the average daily value of AIM shares traded was significantly higher than the corresponding months in 2025. In June, the figure was the lowest for any month of the year at £206.4m, down from £219.4m in June 2025.

In the first six months of this year, there were trades valued at £28.7bn, which is up from £23.6bn in the first half of last year. The average daily value of trades this year is £231.1m, which is the highest it has been since 2022.

Daily trades

In terms of average daily trades, each month of this year is well above the number in the corresponding month in 2025. There was a dip in number in June, but it was still comfortably higher than in June 2025. The total number of trades in the first half was 7.27 million, up from 5.52 million in the first half of last year.

The average daily number of trades so far this year is 58,632, up from 44,485 last year. Even the June figure of 52,832 was higher than every month in 2025 except October when the number was 54,406.

The average number of daily trades is the highest since 2021, although it is still well below that figure of 80,267. There were 852 companies on AIM at the end of that year. It was also the last year when there were a significant number of new admissions, and the total number of companies rose during the year for the first time since 2014.

The greater growth in number of trades than in the value of those trades shows that there is still significant activity by smaller investors.

June 2025

There have been major changes to the list of most liquid shares on AIM over a 12-month period. There can be significant changes from year to year, particularly because many of the larger and more successfully companies are succumbing to bids or deciding to move to the Main Market because they are getting to the size when they can join the FTSE 250 index.

The total number of trades in the first half was 7.27 million, up from 5.52 million in the first half of last year

One of the unusual things about the top 25 AIM companies by value and number of trades in June 2025 is that Greatland Resources and Greatland Gold are both included. That is because the reverse takeover happened during the month.

If the two companies' figures are combined, they would be number three in terms of value traded, and sixth in terms of number of trades.

Five of the top 25 AIM companies by number of trades during June 2025 are now traded on the Main Market. They are linen and workwear hire company Johnson Service Group, gold producer Pan African Resources, identity security services provider GB Group, Ashtead Technology and veterinary practices operator CVS Group. These companies accounted for 8% of the trades during June 2025.

In the list of the top 25 AIM companies by value traded back in June 2025 there are six companies that subsequently moved to the Main Market and three that were taken over.

Johnson Service Group, media company GlobalData, GB Group, consultancy Elixirr International, mortgage services provider Mortgage Advice Bureau and CVS Group have moved to the Main Market. These companies generated 12% of the total value of trades during June 2025.

Compliance services supplier Marlowe, pawnbroker H&T and chain manufacturer Renold have been taken over. These companies accounted for 8.5% of the value traded during the month.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

Given the lack of new companies joining AIM, this shows that AIM has done well to replace the activity in the companies that have departed AIM.

There are already companies that have left since June 2026 or are about to leave AIM. Electrical connections and accessories supplier Volex has subsequently moved back to the Main Market, but it was still on AIM in June. Advanced Medical Solutions is the subject of an agreed bid as is pawnbroker Ramsdens, where the bid from international rival FastCash was recently raised to 675p/share plus dividends of 9p/share following an upbeat trading statement leading to upgraded expectations.

These three companies accounted for more than 10% of the value of shares traded during June 2026. They made up 4% of the number of trades during the month, so they were not as significant on this measure.

Inevitably other companies will leave AIM either via takeover or a move to the Main Market. Oil and gas producer Serica Energy has already stated that it wishes to switch to the Main Market, but it has not finalised the move yet.

Serica Energy has launched an agreed bid for fully listed Pharos Energy, which has assets in Vietnam and Egypt. This will help to diversify its interests away from the North Sea. The bid values Pharos Energy at £145.7m.

Greatland Resources / Greatland Gold is the only company in the top five most traded companies by value in June 2025 and June 2026. Airline and tour operator Jet2 is the only company in the top five in terms of number of trades in each of the months.

Semiconductor wafers manufacturer IQE had the most trades in June 2026. The 98,645 trades were partly down to the interest engendered by the completion of a fundraising at the end of May and a new supply agreement. One year earlier, there was little trading news in June other than concerning a joint quantum powered universal memory project and there were 3,414 trades that month.

This shows that news can prompt significant activity in an AIM share. News concerning uranium exploration attracted interest in Metals One in June 2025 and there were 104,160 trades during the month. There was plenty of news this June, but it did not spark the same amount of interest, so the number of trades was 4,626.

As the largest company on AIM, Greatland Resources generated the greatest value of trades during June 2026. The previous year it was Jet2, which was then the largest AIM company.

AIM AVERAGE DAILY TRADES SINCE BEGINNING OF 2025

MONTH	2026	2025
January	58,961	41,929
February	52,648	41,902
March	58,979	45,525
April	66,059	47,331
May	61,903	44,744
June	52,832	48,679
July		51,799
August		45,494
September		52,648
October		54,406
November		41,234
December		39,005

AIM AVERAGE DAILY VOLUME (£M) SINCE BEGINNING OF 2025

MONTH	2026	2025
January	246	177
February	214.1	190.8
March	211.3	177.8
April	262.7	187.8
May	250.8	193.5
June	206.4	219.4
July		201.5
August		153.9
September		205.4
October		213.2
November		165.2
December		150.9

TOP 5 AIM COMPANIES BY NUMBER OF TRADES

JUNE 2026	JUNE 2025
IQE	Metals One
Filtronic	ITM Power
Greatland Resources	Jet2
ITM Power	Yellow Cake
Jet2	RWS

TOP 5 AIM COMPANIES BY VALUE OF TRADES

JUNE 2026	JUNE 2025
Greatland Resources	Jet2
IQE	Marlowe
Filtronic	Johnson Service Group
Advanced Medical Solutions	Greatland Gold
Yellow Cake	Metals One

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

Market Performance, Indices and Statistics

AIM SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR NAME	% OF MARKET CAP	% OF COMPANIES
Basic materials	20.5	17.3
Industrials	20.1	18
Consumer	20	16.9
Health Care	9.5	9.8
Energy	8.2	11.1
Technology	8.8	12.7
Financials	7.8	9.4
Telecoms	1.7	1.5
Property	1.7	2.1
Utilities	1.5	0.3

FTSE INDICES

ONE-YEAR CHANGES

INDEX	PRICE	% CHANGE
FTSE AIM All-Share	762.55	+0.7
FTSE AIM 50	3524.92	-3.1
FTSE AIM 100	4100.3	+0.9
FTSE Fledgling	12455.96	-5.6
FTSE Small Cap	8040.98	+12.7
FTSE All-Share	5836.47	+18.6
FTSE 100	10868.05	+19.8

COMPANIES BY MARKET CAP

MARKET CAP	NO.
Under £5m	92
£5m-£10m	76
£10m-£25m	122
£25m-£50m	79
£50m-£100m	82
£100m-£250m	91
£250m+	63

KEY AIM STATISTICS

Total number of AIM	605
Number of nominated advisers	23
Number of market makers	20
Total market cap for all AIM	£62.3bn
Total of new money raised	£142.1bn
Total raised by new issues	£48.8bn
Total raised by secondary issues	£93bn
Share turnover value (Jun 2026)	£28.7bn
Number of bargains (Jun 2026)	7.27m
Shares traded (Jun 2026)	1.01bn
Transfers to the official list	221

TOP 5 RISERS OVER 30 DAYS

COMPANY NAME	SECTOR	PRICE (p)	CHANGE (%)
Shaires Holdings Ltd	Financials	$22.50	+200
SysGroup	Technology	30.5	+69.4
CT Automotive	Automotive	53	+68.3
Shearwater Group	Technology	62	+67.6
AOTI Inc	Healthcare	100	+62.6

TOP 5 FALLERS OVER 30 DAYS

COMPANY NAME	SECTOR	PRICE (p)	CHANGE (%)
Clean Power Hydrogen	Cleantech	1.375	-89.9
Phoenix Copper	Mining	0.37	-66.4
MicroSalt	Food	17	-52.8
Cap -XX	Technology	0.145	-49.1
Fletcher King	Support services	37.5	-45.7

AIM - 1 YEAR INDEX CHANGE

Source: London Stock Exchange

Data: Hubinvest Please note - All share prices are the closing prices on the 31st July 2026, and we cannot accept responsibility for their accuracy.

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR

sponsors

AIM Journal

AIM Journal is a monthly publication that focuses on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) of the London Stock Exchange and the companies and advisers involved in the junior market.

Each month the publication includes information about AIM-quoted company news, changes to the brokers and nominated advisers, AIM statistics and general articles concerning AIM.

AIM Journal has been published for nearly a decade. There is no other publication of its type with a pure AIM focus and a sponsorship model, making it free to readers.

The pdf-based publication has an email database of company directors and advisers and an email with a link to the latest edition is sent out each month when the AIM Journal is published.

The AIM Journal can also be downloaded from the website www.AimJournal.info/archive.

The readership via the email is predominantly a professional one. One-quarter of readers are company directors, one-fifth solicitors and accountants, one-fifth brokers and 15% PRs. The rest of the readership is made up of investors, journalists and other individuals.

AIM

The Alternative Investment Market (AIM) was launched on 19 June 1995 with ten companies that had a total market value of £82.2m at the end of the first day's trading. The total amount of money raised by new and existing companies in the remainder of 1995 was £96.5m.

More than 4,000 companies have joined AIM since then, although it should be remembered that some of these are the same companies readmitted after a reverse takeover. These companies have raised more than £137bn either when they join AIM or while they are trading on the junior market.

In 1995, there were 29,099 trades. These days it is unusual if there are not that many trades in a single day.

More than 200 companies have moved to the Main Market. Companies in the FTSE 100 that started on AIM include online gaming operator Entain, previously GVC, insurer Hiscox, engineer Melrose Industries and student accommodation developer Unite Group. Healthcare properties investor Primary Health Properties, self-storage firm Big Yellow, animal genetics provider Genus, and online gaming technology developer Playtech are FTSE 250 index constituents.

PUBLISHED BY: Hubinvest Ltd,

ADDRESS: 1C Beaufort Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. KT1 2TH.

MOBILE / TEL: 07729 478 474

EDITOR: Andrew Hore

PRODUCTION & DESIGN: David Piddington

SPONSORSHIP & ADVERTISING hubinvest50@outlook.com. or telephone 07729 478 474

WINNER
2021 Journalist of the Year
THE SMALL CAP AWARDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MASTER INVESTOR