Aberdeen Sustainable MPS

Quarterly commentary

Q4 2025

Investors should remember that the value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up and that past performance is not a guarantee of future returns.

This report is only for use by a financial adviser or a client who has received advise on investing in this managed portfolio service. It is not for use by non-advised investors or any other third party. For full important information and key risks, please refer to the end of this document.

Objective

The Aberdeen Sustainable MPS aims to achieve a total return from both income and capital growth through a diversified portfolio of collective investment funds over the long term. It focuses on sustainable, ethical and impact funds and is intended for investors with a very low through to a medium high attitude to risk. The portfolio invests in a wide variety of assets, typically in equities, fixed interest, alternatives and money markets. This blend of assets should help to dampen down volatility over the long term.

Discrete annual returns - year to 31/12

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Aberdeen Sustainable MPS 1	-1.39%	-12.44%	4.97%	1.83%	6.22%
ARC MPS 0 - 20% Index	3.01%	-8.92%	5.99%	4.19%	6.91%
Aberdeen Sustainable MPS 2	2.64%	-12.16%	4.74%	2.41%	7.08%
ARC MPS 20 - 40% Index	5.43%	-9.16%	6.40%	5.44%	8.16%
Aberdeen Sustainable MPS 3	6.06%	-12.57%	4.40%	2.51%	7.40%
ARC MPS 40 - 60% Index	8.41%	-9.51%	7.41%	7.32%	9.49%
Aberdeen Sustainable MPS 4	9.06%	-11.76%	4.02%	3.14%	7.78%
ARC MPS 60 - 80% Index	11.57%	-9.47%	8.59%	9.21%	10.31%
Aberdeen Sustainable MPS 5	11.72%	-12.43%	3.41%	3.63%	8.11%
ARC MPS 80 - 100% Index	14.17%	-9.88%	9.62%	11.26%	11.32%

Portfolio performance is based on Aberdeen Sustainable MPS hosted on the Aberdeen Wrap platform. Performance figures are net of the Aberdeen Portfolio Solutions Ltd management fee and underlying funds OCF. Source: Aberdeen, Financial Express. As at 31.12.2025. ARC Private Client Indices are based on actual client portfolio returns provided by various investment management companies. These portfolio returns are allocated to one of four categories based on the volatility of their returns relative to world equities, and an average return is calculated for each category. Grouping portfolios by their volatility differs from the traditional approach, which compares portfolios which have similar asset allocations. Instead, investment managers may use whatever asset allocation they consider appropriate to achieve the desired levels of return and volatility.

Key points

- It was a strong quarter for global markets, with the broadest index for world equities ending the period up around 7% in sterling terms. In the face of more persistent inflation, central banks carried a 'wait and see' tone into the new year as the US Federal Reserve, Bank of England (BoE) and European Central Bank (ECB) began to diverge on the outlook for their respective economies. The quarter saw both the Fed and ECB cut rates by 50 basis points (bps) with the BoE cutting by just 25bps.
- In contrast, the Bank of Japan (BoJ) maintained its borrowing costs at 0.25%, undeterred by rising wage pressures and services inflation. BoJ Governor Kazuo Ueda said real interest rates remained very low but acknowledged fresh risks to the outlook from US President Donald Trump's proposed trade policies during December, with the yen touching a one-month low on his words.
- After appearing to be on a knife edge for much of the run up, the US presidential election saw a Republican victory and Donald Trump being re-elected as president, having won all seven swing states. While it is difficult to predict the details of his future policies, it seems trade and immigration will be top of his agenda when he is inaugurated in January.
- Reflationary worries were also unleashed on domestic shores as the Labour Party's first Budget in 14 years stoked fears that higher corporate national insurance contributions and an increased minimum wage would force companies to hike prices at the tills.
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- In the world's second largest economy, the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party said it would adopt an 'appropriately loose' monetary policy during 2025, the first easing of its stance in some 14 years, alongside a more proactive fiscal policy to spur economic growth.

Market Commentary

The final quarter of the year is invariably a time in which the media provides us with various best of lists or what to look out for during the coming year, but few are as interesting as the American ink company Pantone's prediction for 2025's colour of the year. Selected during December and succeeding the much-heralded Peach Fuzz of 2024, it seems we are moving into the age of Mocha Mousse, a shade that will apparently help to "extend our perceptions of the browns from being humble and grounded to embrace the aspirational and luxe".

Pantone has since also added that one of the key facets of Mocha Mousse is that it feeds into our human desire for harmony, a shade that could well be required in 2025 if the final quarter of 2024 is anything to go by, characterised as it was by political wrangling, both home and abroad.

Indeed, investors felt a full spectrum of emotions during the quarter as Labour's first budget in 14 years, the US presidential election, increasing tensions in the Middle East and political turmoil in Europe all took turns in driving markets.

Although considered a colour by many, black is technically a shade. No matter where you stand on the debate however, the newly elected Labour Party claimed it had inherited a £22 billion 'black hole' in the nation's finances and intended to fix it with October's Budget. It unveiled a debut plan that included £40 billion worth of tax rises – the largest in 30 years – which the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) said would increase the UK tax take to an all-time high of 38% of gross domestic product by the end of the decade.

Arguably one of the biggest measures and a big revenue raiser for the government was an increase in employer national insurance contributions, expected to raise up to £25 billion for the Treasury's coffers. However, such tax rises will be more than offset by the additional spending announced, which led the OBR to nudge up its growth forecast for next year from 1.9% to 2%.

The market reaction was colourful to say the least, with the yield on 10-year UK government bonds rising to their highest level since Labour took power at the start of July. UK mid-cap stocks enjoyed a lift as market players deemed the government's first UK budget to be less punitive on businesses than many had feared.

While predicted to be an inflationary set of measures, there was at least some good news on the price rise front, as data during October showed that inflation had dropped below the Bank of England's (BoE) 2% target for the first time since April 2021.

With the final major political event of the year on domestic shores done, it was on to the US where a not quite Mocha Mousse Donald Trump rode a red wave across the country, taking all seven swing states required to win a landslide victory and leaving his opponent, Kamala Harris, waving a white flag.

Trump's victory saw mainstream US indices soar to record highs in the immediate aftermath, led by financial and energy companies. US small-caps also performed strongly as investors expected domestic-focused stocks to benefit from a lower regulatory and tax regime, as well as being less exposed to any likely import tariffs.

The US dollar also gained against a basket of developed currencies as investors bet that heightened inflation would be on its way following Trump's trade tariffs. The 10-year Treasury yield jumped more than 14 basis points (bps) to 4.43%, hitting its highest level since July, as many predicted that a Trump presidency would increase economic growth and spending, but in turn could dampen expectations that the Federal Reserve would look to cut interest rates as quickly or as deeply.

Events in Washington did not curtail the Fed from a planned move the following day however, cutting rates by 25bps as largely anticipated. During his testimony, the chair of the central bank, Jay Powell, seemed blue in the face as he repeated the argument for further cuts depending on incoming data on inflation and the strength of the labour market.

The Fed wasn't the only central bank to cut rates that week, as our own BoE also made its move, cutting rates on domestic shores by another 25bps to 4.75%. The bank's Monetary Policy Committee concluded that although the Budget was likely to boost growth and inflation, a gradual approach to loosening policy remained appropriate, voting 8-1 in favour of action. Across the Channel, Europe bourses were hardly in the pink. Although the German index pushed all-time highs, France, Spain, Italy and Switzerland all posted losses for November. France's underperformance spilled into December as Michel Barnier, the once Brexit negotiator come French Prime Minister, was left red faced after losing a no-confidence vote, plunging the French government into more political turmoil. French government bonds bore the brunt of the investor sell-off, not aided by credit ratings agency Moody's downgrading France's debt rating shortly afterwards, adding pressure on the country's efforts to rein in strained public finances.

The final notable acts of the quarter, indeed the year, were rate decisions from the European Central Bank (ECB), the Fed and the BoE in December, with each decision painting a slightly different hue in respect of the underlying economy.

In its fourth 25bps cut of the year, the ECB's forward guidance removed the term 'sufficiently restrictive', hinting at more moves to come into 2025, as further support for the core countries of Europe (specifically France and Germany) is needed.

The Fed also rounded off 1 percentage point of rate cuts for the year, but gave a much more mixed indication. In its not quite Mocha Mousse beige book (a summary of current economic conditions), policymakers now expect two interest rate cuts by the end of 2025, half the number the market was anticipating.

While the BoE was off colour with its decision to hold rates at 4.75%, it was largely expected due to the lack of progress in squeezing out inflationary pressures and the recent stronger-than-expected wage data. The split vote of 6 (hold) to 3 for a quarter-point cut was a little more dovish than markets had expected and suggests that further cuts could be on the way should the data soften further.

The announcement left what central banks will do in the coming year up for debate. Much like Pantone's Pearl River, it's fair to say it's a bit of a grey area.

Portfolio commentary

The fourth quarter of 2024 proved to be eventful from a macroeconomic, market and political perspective. Donald Trump was elected the 47th US President, the UK Labour Party held its first Budget in 14 years (a few months after its election victory), French President Emmanuel Macron appointed François Bayrou as the next French Prime Minister after his predecessor Michel Barnier suffered a vote of no confidence and resigned, while in Germany the collapse of the coalition government in November saw federal elections scheduled for February 2025. It was anything but plain sailing on the political front.

From a macroeconomic perspective, the picture was mixed depending on the geography in question. The US macro backdrop continued to be relatively robust and, as a result, is likely to face more persistent inflationary pressures. The core European countries (France and Germany) are facing a more difficult environment than the periphery (Spain and Greece), while the outlook for the UK is uncertain amid higher corporate taxes, a more challenged employment market, softer growth data and stickier-than-expected inflation. China has been implementing stimulatory policy to address the multiple headwinds of slowing growth, a troubled property sector and waning consumer confidence with limited success.

From a market viewpoint, the above factors influenced some asset classes more than others. The Trump presidential victory will likely mean lower corporate taxes, less regulation and higher nominal growth, but higher inflation driven by trade tariffs and wage growth (supported by limited migration). This led the Federal Open Market Committee to revise its estimates of interest rate cuts in 2025 from four to two quarter-point cuts. As a result, Treasury yields rose sharply with the 10-year yield moving from circa 3.8% at the start of the quarter to 4.55% at year end. We have witnessed similar shifts in yields in the UK, as market reaction to the Budget pushed rates higher, whilst the Bank of England's decision to hold rates at 4.75% at its December meeting also kept investors on edge. Investment grade (IG) corporate bonds suffered because of these higher government bond yields, but

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credit spreads tightened notably during the quarter, which offset some of the negative effect of higher rates. It was a similar story for global high yield bonds. Although the interest rate sensitivity of this asset class is lower than IG, the level of spread tightening was more modest and returns were also negative. Emerging market debt also suffered during the quarter. Hard currency debt sold off with the pick-up in global government bond yields being the key driver, while local currency debt held up slightly better, largely due to the weakness of sterling.

Equity markets were largely driven by similar factors, although the reaction was less homogeneous. US equities rallied hard on the outcome of the US election. Certainty played a part in this reaction (Donald Trump being the clear winner), as did the more market and US friendly policies that Trump had promoted. The protectionist policy favours US businesses over those importing into the US and this was represented in the more negative returns seen from bourses across continental Europe, the UK, Asia ex-Japan and emerging markets more broadly.

Currency movements were one of the biggest influences on returns during the quarter. The expectation of higher-for-longer interest rates in the US buoyed the US dollar against all other G10 currencies. The pound weakened by more than 6% versus the greenback but strengthened marginally against the euro and more markedly against Japanese yen (by circa 3%). The portfolios' US dollar exposure therefore had a broadly positive impact during the quarter.

It was a mixed period for alternative assets. Global real estate investment trusts (REITs) and infrastructure have a notable level of interest rate sensitivity, which weighed on these asset classes. However, they also tend to have a large exposure to the US dollar and this translation effect helped to reduce a negative return from REITs and moved infrastructure into the black in sterling terms.

Tactical asset allocation was a negative contributor to returns across low-risk and medium-risk mandates and marginally accretive across higher-risk mandates.

Fund selection continued to be challenged within the Sustainable MPS solutions.

SMPS 1

Sustainable MPS 1 entered the quarter being overweight government bonds on a UK, US and global basis. This was broadly funded from being underweight absolute return assets and to a lesser extent global high yield bonds. In addition, these mandates were marginally overweight global infrastructure, which was funded from a small underweight to global equities. In early December, the decision was made to reduce the duration overweight by selling the all-maturities overweight positions in UK, US and global government bonds, while implementing a similar overweight to short duration UK and global government bonds.

During the quarter, the overweight to government bonds weighed on returns, as did the underweight to absolute return assets and global equities. This negative contribution was negated to a certain extent by the underweight to global high yield bonds as well the overweight to global infrastructure.

From a Fund selection perspective, SMPS 1 faced a pretty difficult environment during the quarter with the backdrop to more sustainably orientated Funds being far from positive. The re-election of Donald Trump as 47th President and his expected areas of focus (tariffs, deregulation and a reduction in migration) aren't naturally supportive for more ESG-orientated solutions.

From a fixed interest perspective, it was a challenge for more traditional and sustainable managers alike in an environment where rates shifted markedly higher. The slightly longer maturity profile of the abrdn Global Government Bond Fund and the Vanguard UK Government Bond Fund meant that these lagged their underlying benchmarks. The SLI Ethical Corporate Bond Fund and the Royal London Sustainable Short Duration Corporate Bond Fund also underperformed. These headwinds were no less prevalent in the high yield space with the M&G High Yield Bond Fund also underperforming its benchmark. Emerging market debt also suffered as the prospect of a stronger US dollar weighed heavily. The Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (Local Currency) Index and Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (US$) Index Funds trailed their benchmarks.

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Sustainable and impact global equity Funds also faced stiff headwinds with the Impax Environmental Markets Fund underperforming the most. It was notable that all global equity Funds held within these mandates materially lagged traditional benchmarks with the growth orientation and mid- and small-cap tilts really weighing on returns.

The Sparinvest Ethical Global Value Fund, with its orientation towards value investing, was less negatively affected but it was nonetheless a negative relative contributor to returns. There was some slightly brighter news within UK equities where the iShares UK Equity ESG Screened and Optimised Index Fund comfortably outperformed the broader UK market. This only marginally offset the negative contribution from the abrdn UK Sustainable and Responsible Investment Equity Fund, which lagged more considerably.

From an alternatives perspective, the story wasn't any brighter. The First Sentier Responsible Infrastructure and iShares Environment & Low Carbon Tilt Real Estate Index Funds both lagged their benchmarks. In the absolute return space, the TwentyFour Sustainable Short Term Bond Fund delivered positive returns, but these were behind what could have been earned on cash.

There were no changes to asset allocation or Fund selection during the quarter.

SMPS 2

Sustainable MPS 2 entered the quarter being overweight government bonds on a UK, US and global basis. This was broadly funded from being underweight absolute return assets and to a lesser extent global high yield bonds. In addition, these mandates were marginally overweight global infrastructure, which was funded from a small underweight to global equities. In early December, the decision was made to reduce the duration overweight by selling the all-maturities overweight positions in UK, US and global government bonds, while implementing a similar overweight to short duration UK and global government bonds.

During the quarter, the overweight to government bonds weighed on returns, as did the underweight to absolute return assets and global equities. This negative contribution was negated to a certain extent by the underweight to global high yield bonds as well the overweight to global infrastructure.

From a Fund selection perspective, SMPS 2 faced a pretty difficult environment during the quarter with the backdrop to more sustainably orientated Funds being far from positive. The re-election of Donald Trump as 47th President and his expected areas of focus (tariffs, deregulation and a reduction in migration) aren't naturally supportive for more ESG-orientated solutions.

From a fixed interest perspective, it was a challenge for more traditional and sustainable managers alike in an environment where rates shifted markedly higher. The slightly longer maturity profile of the abrdn Global Government Bond Fund and the Vanguard UK Government Bond Fund meant that these lagged their underlying benchmarks. The SLI Ethical Corporate Bond Fund and the Royal London Sustainable Short Duration Corporate Bond Fund also underperformed. These headwinds were no less prevalent in the high yield space with the M&G High Yield Bond Fund also underperforming its benchmark. Emerging market debt also suffered as the prospect of a stronger US dollar weighed heavily. The Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (Local Currency) Index and Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (US$) Index Funds trailed their benchmarks.

Sustainable and impact global equity Funds also faced stiff headwinds with the Impax Environmental Markets Fund underperforming the most. It was notable that all global equity Funds held within these mandates materially lagged traditional benchmarks with the growth orientation and mid- and small-cap tilts really weighing on returns. The Sparinvest Ethical Global Value Fund, with its orientation towards value investing, was less negatively affected but it was nonetheless a negative relative contributor to returns. There was some slightly brighter news within UK equities where the iShares UK Equity ESG Screened and Optimised Index Fund comfortably outperformed the broader UK market. This only marginally offset the negative contribution from the abrdn UK Sustainable and Responsible Investment Equity Fund, which lagged more considerably.

From an alternatives perspective, the story wasn't any brighter. The First Sentier Responsible Infrastructure and iShares Environment & Low Carbon Tilt Real Estate Index Funds both lagged their benchmarks. In the absolute return space, the TwentyFour Sustainable Short Term Bond Fund delivered positive returns, but these were

behind what could have been earned on cash.
There were no changes to asset allocation or Fund selection during the quarter.

SMPS 3

Sustainable MPS 3 entered the quarter being overweight government bonds on a UK, US and global basis. This was broadly funded from being underweight absolute return assets and to a lesser extent global high yield bonds. In addition, these mandates were marginally overweight global infrastructure, which was funded from a small underweight to global equities. In early December, the decision was made to reduce the duration overweight by selling the all-maturities overweight positions in UK, US and global government bonds, while implementing a similar overweight to short duration UK and global government bonds.

During the quarter, the overweight to government bonds and global infrastructure weighed on returns, as did the underweight to absolute return assets and global equities. This negative contribution was negated to a certain extent by the underweight to global high yield bonds.

From a Fund selection perspective, SMPS 3 faced a pretty difficult environment during the quarter with the backdrop to more sustainably orientated Funds being far from positive. The re-election of Donald Trump as 47th President and his expected areas of focus (tariffs, deregulation and a reduction in migration) aren't naturally supportive for more ESG-orientated solutions. From a fixed interest perspective, it was a challenge for more traditional and sustainable managers alike in an environment where rates shifted markedly higher. The slightly longer maturity profile of the abrdn Global Government Bond Fund and the Vanguard UK Government Bond Fund meant that these lagged their underlying benchmarks. The SLI Ethical Corporate Bond Fund and the Royal London Sustainable Short Duration Corporate Bond Fund also underperformed. These headwinds were no less prevalent in the high yield space with the M&G High Yield Bond Fund also underperforming its benchmark. Emerging market debt also suffered as the prospect of a stronger US dollar weighed heavily. The Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (Local Currency) Index and Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (US$) Index Funds trailed their benchmarks. Sustainable and impact global equity Funds also faced stiff headwinds with the Impax Environmental Markets Fund underperforming the most. It was notable that all global equity Funds held within these mandates materially lagged traditional benchmarks with the growth orientation and mid- and small-cap tilts really weighing on returns. The Sparinvest Ethical Global Value Fund, with its orientation towards value investing, was less negatively affected but it was nonetheless a negative relative contributor to returns. There was some slightly brighter news within UK equities where the iShares UK Equity ESG Screened and Optimised Index Fund comfortably outperformed the broader UK market. This only marginally offset the negative contribution from the abrdn UK Sustainable and Responsible Investment Equity Fund, which lagged more considerably.

From an alternatives perspective, the story wasn't any brighter. The First Sentier Responsible Infrastructure and iShares Environment & Low Carbon Tilt Real Estate Index Funds both lagged their benchmarks. In the absolute return space, the TwentyFour Sustainable Short Term Bond Fund delivered positive returns, but these were behind what could have been earned on cash.

There were no changes to asset allocation or Fund selection during the quarter.

SMPS 4

Sustainable MPS 4 entered the quarter being overweight government bonds on a UK, US and global basis. This was broadly funded from being underweight absolute return assets and to a lesser extent global high yield bonds. In addition, these mandates were marginally overweight global infrastructure, which was funded from a small underweight to global equities.

In early December, the decision was made to reduce the duration overweight by selling the all-maturities overweight positions in UK, US and global government bonds, while implementing a similar overweight to short duration UK and global government bonds.

During the quarter, the overweight to government bonds and global infrastructure weighed on returns, as did the underweight to absolute return assets and global equities. This negative contribution was negated to a certain extent by the underweight to global high yield bonds.

From a Fund selection perspective, SMPS 4 faced a pretty difficult environment during the quarter with the backdrop to more sustainably orientated Funds being far from positive. The re-election of Donald Trump as 47th President and his expected areas of focus (tariffs, deregulation and a reduction in migration) aren't naturally supportive for more ESG-orientated solutions.

From a fixed interest perspective, it was a challenge for more traditional and sustainable managers alike in an environment where rates shifted markedly higher. The slightly longer maturity profile of the abrdn Global Government Bond Fund and the Vanguard UK Government Bond Fund meant that these lagged their underlying benchmarks. The SLI Ethical Corporate Bond Fund also underperformed. These headwinds were no less prevalent in the high yield space with the M&G High Yield Bond Fund also underperforming its benchmark. Emerging market debt also suffered as the prospect of a stronger US dollar weighed heavily. The Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (Local Currency) Index and Legal & General Emerging Markets Government Bond (US$) Index Funds trailed their benchmarks.

Sustainable and impact global equity Funds also faced stiff headwinds with the Impax Environmental Markets Fund underperforming the most. It was notable that all global equity Funds held within these mandates materially lagged traditional benchmarks with the growth orientation and mid- and small-cap tilts really weighing on returns. The Sparinvest Ethical Global Value Fund, with its orientation towards value investing, was less negatively affected but it was nonetheless a negative relative contributor to returns. There was some slightly brighter news within UK equities where the iShares UK Equity ESG Screened and Optimised Index Fund comfortably outperformed the broader UK market. This only marginally offset the negative contribution from the abrdn UK Sustainable and Responsible Investment Equity Fund, which lagged more considerably.

From an alternatives perspective, the story wasn't any brighter.

The First Sentier Responsible Infrastructure and iShares Environment & Low Carbon Tilt Real Estate Index Funds both lagged their benchmarks. In the absolute return space, the TwentyFour Sustainable Short Term Bond Fund delivered positive returns, but these were behind what could have been earned on cash.

There were no changes to asset allocation or Fund selection during the quarter.

SMPS 5

Sustainable MPS 5 entered the quarter being overweight government bonds on a US and global basis. This was funded from being underweight global high yield bonds. In addition, these mandates were overweight global infrastructure, which was funded from a underweight to global equities. In early December, the decision was made to reduce the duration overweight by selling the all-maturities US government bonds, while implementing an increased overweight to short duration global government bonds. During the quarter, the overweight to government bonds and global infrastructure weighed on returns, as did the underweight to global equities. This negative contribution was negated to a certain extent by the underweight to global high yield bonds.

From a Fund selection perspective, SMPS 5 faced a pretty difficult environment during the quarter with the backdrop to more sustainably orientated Funds being far from positive. The re-election of Donald Trump as 47th President and his expected areas of focus (tariffs, deregulation and a reduction in migration) aren't naturally supportive for more ESG-orientated solutions.

From a fixed interest perspective, it was a challenge for more traditional and sustainable managers alike in an environment where rates shifted markedly higher. The SLI Ethical Corporate Bond Fund trailed its benchmark. These headwinds were no less prevalent in the high yield space, with the M&G High Yield Gond Fund also underperforming.

Sustainable and impact global equity Funds also faced stiff headwinds with the Impax Environmental Markets Fund underperforming the most.

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It was notable that all global equity Funds held within these mandates materially lagged traditional benchmarks with the growth orientation and mid- and small-cap tilts really weighing on returns. The Sparinvest Ethical Global Value Fund, with its orientation towards value investing, was less negatively affected but it was nonetheless a negative relative contributor to returns. There was some slightly brighter news within UK equities where the iShares UK Equity ESG Screened and Optimised Index Fund comfortably outperformed the broader UK market. This only marginally offset the negative contribution from the abrdn UK Sustainable and Responsible Investment Equity Fund, which lagged more considerably.

From an alternatives perspective the story wasn't any brighter, with the First Sentier Responsible Infrastructure Fund lagging its benchmark.

There were no changes to asset allocation or Fund selection during the quarter.

Sustainability Case Studies

We met with the managers of the Impax Environmental Markets Fund. It aims to deliver sustainable, above-market returns over the longer term by investing in the growing resource efficiency and environmental markets. One of the topics for discussion was the environmental benefits of PTC and DSM-Firmenich, which are both in the top five holdings in the Fund.

PTC develops and produces industrial software and services that are used by many product engineers. A product's lifetime environmental impact is largely determined during the design stage. PTC helps to minimise the environmental impact of the design process by removing the need for physical prototypes. Its software facilitates the transition towards connected digital factories. Finally, once out in the field, product lifecycle management software and the Internet of Things (IoT) allow for real-time monitoring and prescriptive maintenance. PTC's design software helped avoid more than 1.5 million tonnes of carbon emissions in 2021.

DSM-Firmenich produces speciality chemicals spanning the food, beauty, healthcare and animal end markets. It was formed from the merger of DSM and Firmenich in 2023, which created a business that benefits from three long-term trends: improving diets, shifts from chemical to natural ingredients and sustainable agriculture.

Its nutritional products mostly use natural ingredients, contributing to improved health and wellbeing. Its animal products improve livestock health and efficacy of feed conversion, lowering input-related waste and limiting harmful by-products, including excessive antibiotics usage. The company also works to reduce methane from animal farming. Its emission-reducing products, which include an animal feed additive, a fruit processing enzyme and a blend of vitamins, enzymes and biotics for animal feed, reduced emissions by nearly 30 million tonnes in 2021.

Outlook

While not as certain as it perhaps was in 2024, central bank action in lowering borrowing costs is not likely to be a once-in-a-blue-moon event and should continue throughout 2025 as inflation falls back towards target and wage growth cools. This combination should be supportive of consumer sentiment and spending, but wage growth will need to slow further before underlying inflationary pressures settle at a consistent rate, albeit this may not happen quite as rapidly as previously expected.

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Important Information

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Risks

All investments involve risk. The risks of some of the funds may be comparatively high. The risk descriptions at the end of this document correspond to the main risk factors for each fund within the model. "General Risks" mostly apply to all funds within the model. A fund could potentially be affected by risks beyond those listed described in this document, nor are these risk descriptions themselves intended as exhaustive. For full information and key risks, please refer to the end of this document.

Credit risk: The fund invests in securities which are subject to the risk that the issuer may default on interest or capital payments.

Interest rate risk: The fund price can go up or down daily for a variety of reasons including changes in interest rates, inflation expectations or the perceived credit quality of individual countries or securities.

Equity risk: The fund invests in equity and equity related securities. These are sensitive to variations in the stock markets which can be volatile and change substantially in short periods of time.

Emerging Markets risk: The fund invests in emerging market equities and / or bonds. Investing in emerging markets involves a greater risk of loss than investing in more developed markets due to, among other factors, greater political, tax, economic, foreign exchange, liquidity and regulatory risks.

Derivatives risk: The use of derivatives carries the risk of reduced liquidity, substantial loss and increased volatility in adverse market conditions, such as a failure amongst market participants. The use of derivatives may result in the fund being leveraged (where market exposure and thus the potential for loss by the fund exceeds the amount it has invested) and in these market conditions the effect of leverage will be to magnify losses.

High Yield Credit risk: The fund invests in high yielding bonds which carry a greater risk of default than those with lower yields.

For more information visit aberdeenadviser.com

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