saltydog INVESTOR

Successful trend investing

March 2026

Markets fall as oil price rises

On 28th February the US and Israel launched a new offensive against Iran. Since then, stock markets around the world have suffered significant losses, and the price of oil has risen by more than 50%.

The operations, codenamed Operation Roaring Lion by Israel and Operation Epic Fury by the United States, began with air and missile strikes on multiple Iranian cities, military facilities and leadership targets. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was killed during the first wave of airstrikes on Tehran.

The scale of the attacks has been unprecedented, with hundreds of strikes targeting key military installations, nuclear-related infrastructure, oil facilities and command centres from Tehran to Bandar Abbas. Iran has responded with retaliatory attacks across the region, including strikes on oil and gas infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Kuwait, sinking tankers in the Gulf, and attempts to mine and blockade the Strait of Hormuz.

Unsurprisingly, oil prices have risen sharply since the conflict began, with traders reacting quickly to the increased risk of supply disruption and briefly pushing Brent crude above $100 a barrel for the first time in several years.

Despite the long-term transition towards renewable energy, oil remains hugely important to the global economy. It still plays a vital role in transport, aviation, shipping and petrochemicals.

The structure of the oil industry has also changed significantly over time. For much of the twentieth century global oil production was dominated by a small group of international companies known as the "Seven Sisters", including Exxon, Mobil, Chevron, BP and Shell.

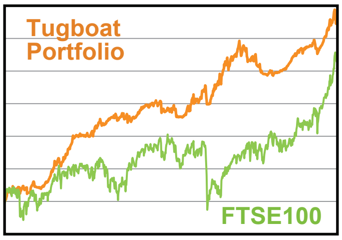
Today a large share of global oil production comes from national oil companies owned or controlled by governments, such as Saudi Aramco, Russia's Rosneft and the National Iranian Oil Company. Because many governments rely heavily on oil revenues to fund public spending, developments in the energy market can quickly become entwined with broader economic and geopolitical considerations.

Another factor influencing oil

continued on p2

Brent crude closes above £100 a barrel

Our Tugboat portfolio has gone down 1.3% in the last four weeks.



Markets fall as oil prices rises

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markets over the past decade has been relatively low investment in new production. Following the collapse in oil prices in 2014, many companies cut exploration budgets and postponed major projects. Investor pressure to reduce exposure to fossil fuels has also contributed to reduced capital spending across much of the industry.

The recent escalation in the Middle East has therefore arrived at a time when energy markets were already finely balanced. Even a modest disruption to supply has the potential to push prices higher.

For investors, the immediate impact has been increased market volatility. Equity markets typically respond negatively to geopolitical shocks, particularly when they involve the risk of disruptions to global trade or energy supplies.

Energy companies often benefit from higher oil prices, but the broader impact on equity markets tends to be negative, at least in the short term. Higher input costs, rising uncertainty and concerns about economic growth can all weigh on investor sentiment.

Although the effect has been felt all across the globe, Europe and Asia have been hit the hardest due to their reliance on oil flows through the Strait of Hormuz.

Over the last decade, US shale oil has transformed America into the world's largest oil producer, making it relatively insulated from Middle East supply shocks such as the current Iran conflict.

Stock Market Update

Most of the major stock markets around the world went up in February, building on the momentum that started in December and then continued through the early weeks of this year.

The FTSE 100 performed particularly well, extending the rally that saw it rise strongly in 2025 and again in January.

European markets also made good progress, with both the French CAC 40 and Germany's DAX posting solid gains.

In the US the picture was more mixed. The Dow Jones Industrial Average edged slightly higher, but the broader S&P 500 and the technology-heavy Nasdaq both fell back as some of the large technology stocks lost ground.

Japan was the standout performer. The Nikkei 225 surged following last month's election result, making it one of the strongest major markets in February. Elsewhere in Asia, the Shanghai Composite also moved higher, although Hong Kong and India struggled.

Brazil's Ibovespa added further gains after its strong start to the year.

However, this proved to be the calm before the storm. When markets closed on Friday 27 February there was no way of knowing that President Trump had already approved joint US-Israeli attacks against Iran, scheduled to begin the following morning.

Markets reacted by opening lower on Monday and have continued to fall over the last couple of weeks.

Index	1st Jan to 31st March	1st April to 30th June	1st July to 30th Sept	1st Oct to 31st Dec	January	February	1st to 13th March
FTSE 100	5.0%	2.1%	6.7%	6.2%	2.9%	6.7%	-6.0%
FTSE 250	-5.6%	11.0%	1.8%	2.1%	3.5%	2.2%	-7.1%
Dow Jones Ind Ave	-1.3%	5.0%	5.2%	3.6%	1.7%	0.2%	-4.9%
S&P 500	-4.6%	10.6%	7.8%	2.3%	1.4%	-0.9%	-3.6%
NASDAQ	-10.4%	17.7%	11.2%	2.6%	0.9%	-3.4%	-2.5%
DAX	11.3%	7.9%	-0.1%	2.6%	0.2%	3.0%	-7.3%
CAC40	5.6%	-1.6%	3.0%	3.2%	-0.3%	5.6%	-7.8%
Nikkei 225	-10.7%	13.7%	11.0%	12.0%	5.9%	10.4%	-8.5%
Hang Seng	15.3%	4.1%	11.6%	-4.6%	6.9%	-2.8%	-4.4%
Shanghai Composite	-0.5%	3.3%	12.7%	2.2%	3.8%	1.1%	-1.6%
Sensex	-0.9%	8.0%	-4.0%	6.2%	-3.5%	-1.2%	-8.3%
Ibovespa	8.3%	6.6%	5.3%	10.2%	12.6%	4.0%	-5.9%

Data source: Morningstar

Portfolio Update

Each month I look at how the recent changes in sector performance affect our hypothetical portfolios.

In previous newsletters, I have discussed the rationale behind our example portfolios. If you haven't seen these, subscribers have access to our previous newsletters on our website - saltydoginvestor.com.

There is also an explanation in our members guide.

Markets strengthened during 2024 after a cautious start. At the beginning of the year, the portfolios held large allocations in the 'Safe Haven' group, with around 80% in the Tugboat, 60% in the Ocean Liner and 40% in the Speedboat.

As conditions improved, we reinvested into more volatile sectors. By the time we published the January 2025 newsletter, the 'Safe Haven' allocation had fallen to around 40% in the Tugboat, 15% in the Ocean Liner and just 10% in the Speedboat.

Last year there were a couple of market pullbacks, most notably in March, when we temporarily increased our cash positions.

However, the rally gathered pace through the summer and by early autumn the portfolios were, to all intents and purposes, fully invested.

There was another brief wobble in November, but the portfolios remained largely invested.

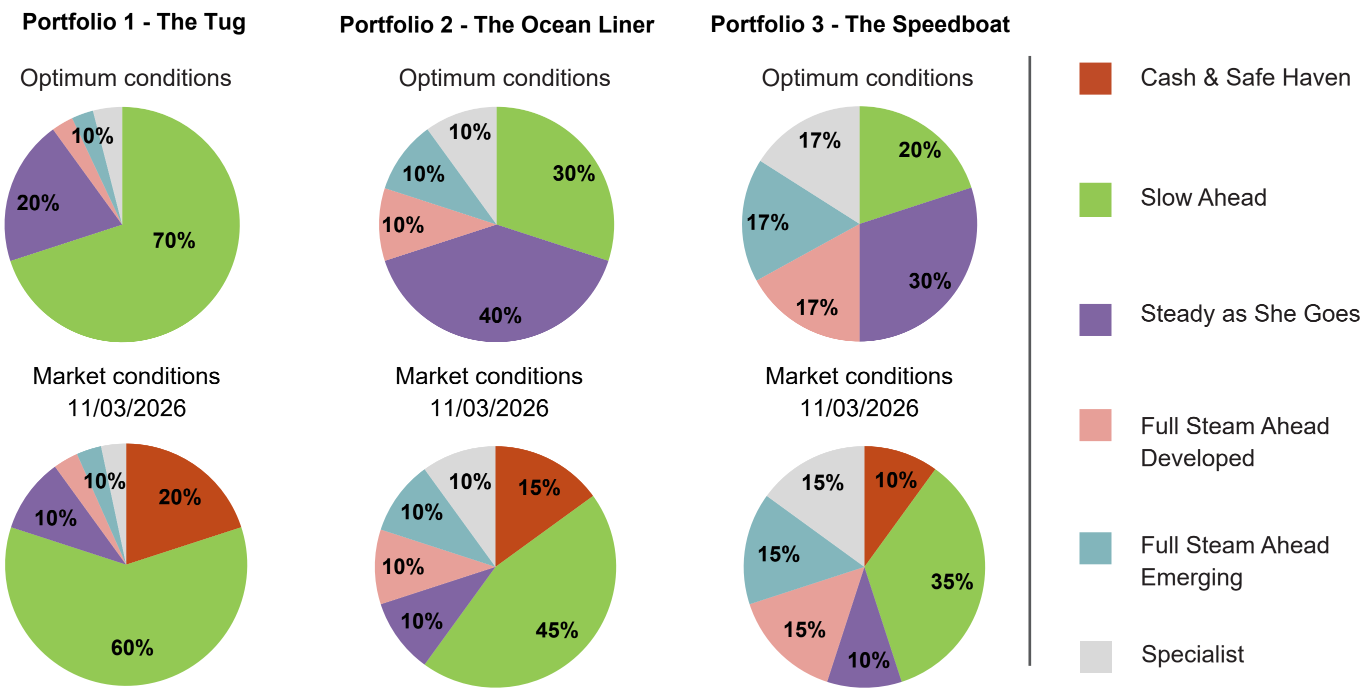
Up until the end of February this year, most sectors were showing gains over four, twelve and twenty-six weeks, with the strongest returns coming from the more volatile groups.

However, markets have fallen sharply in the first two weeks of March, and we have responded by reducing our overall exposure to the markets.

Our example portfolios

Here are the three hypothetical portfolios that we review each month. They are shown at their most aggressive (under optimum market conditions) and as they stand now, based on this month's data.

After a difficult November, markets improved through until the end of February and that was reflected in overall sector performance giving us plenty of funds to choose from. That all changed in March. While long-term performance looks strong, finding funds that have done well in the last two weeks is more of a challenge.



On the next few pages we give the details of the Saltydog Demonstration Portfolios that we use to show how the Saltydog information can be used - details of each trade are reported every week on the website.

Tugboat Portfolio

Objective

In November 2010 we put just over £40,000 into a fund supermarket to demonstrate how the data that we produce can be used to run a simple portfolio.

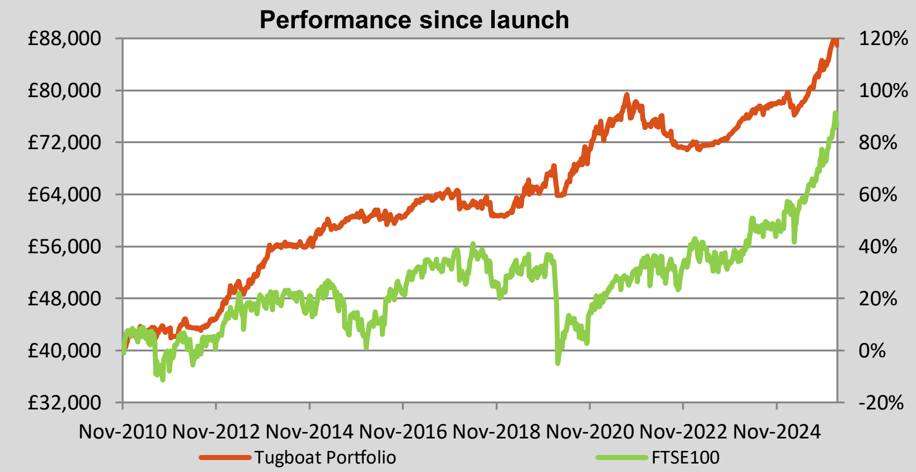
The aim is to run it in such a way that it avoids any major market falls, but also makes gains when they rise.

Because it's designed to weather the storms and make slow, but steady, progress we called it the 'Tugboat'.

The rules that we use to operate it are simple.

- Keep the majority of the portfolio in the 'Slow Ahead' Group, or the 'Safe Haven' and cash if necessary; never invest too much in the riskier 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups, a maximum of 10%.
- Only invest in the more volatile groups when their recent performance justifies it.
- Having determined which groups to invest in, choose the leading sectors from each group.
- Finally, pick funds from these sectors based on their recent performance.

Portfolio Performance



This portfolio was launched in November 2010 to demonstrate how the Saltydog data can be used to manage a low-volatility portfolio.

As you would expect, it invests mainly in funds from our least volatile groups. Since launch, the original £40,000 investment has more than doubled to nearly £87,000.

Over the last twelve months, the portfolio has risen by 12.2%.

Returns

Portfolio Launch Date	23/11/2010	Return in the last 4 weeks	-1.3%
Initial Investment	£40,042	Return in the last 3 months	3.0%
Current Value	£86,892	Return in the last 6 months	7.4%
Return since launch	117.0%	Average Annual Return since launch	5.2%

Current Holdings

Initial Trade Date	Fund Name	Group	Current Price (p)	Current Value (£)	Original Cost (£)	Gain (£)	Gain (%)	Portfolio %
05/06/2025	Artemis Monthly Distribution	Slow	174	£18,013	£15,000	£3,013	20.1%	20.7%
18/07/2025	VT Momentum Diversified Income	Slow	138	£10,301	£10,000	£301	3.0%	11.9%
07/08/2025	Premier Miton Cautious Monthly Inc	Slow	249	£16,277	£15,000	£1,277	8.5%	18.7%
16/10/2025	Liontrust Balanced	Slow	303	£9,888	£10,000	-£112	-1.1%	11.4%
19/01/2026	BNY Mellon UK Equity	Steady	144	£7,004	£7,000	£4	0.1%	8.1%
10/07/2025	Polar Capital Global Technology	Emerging	14,810	£7,121	£5,075	£2,046	40.3%	8.2%
29/01/2026	BG Emerging Markets Growth	Emerging	1,393	£1,947	£2,000	-£53	-2.7%	2.2%
Cash				£16,341				18.8%
Total Portfolio Value				£86,892				

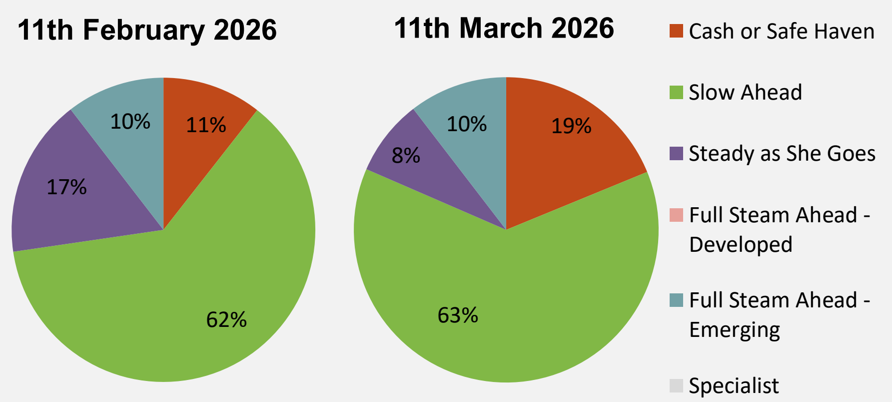
Pending Transactions (these are orders that have been placed, but not yet reflected in the figures above)

Tugboat Portfolio

Other transactions this month

Fund	Group	Value (£)	Transaction	Date
Premier Miton Cautious Monthly Inc	Slow	£5,000	Increase current holding	19/02/2026
L&G Strategic Bond	Slow	£4,676	Sell	05/03/2026
IFSL Marlborough UK Micro Cap Grth	Slow	£7,366	Sell	05/03/2026

Group Allocation



During the first quarter of 2025, sector performance weakened and we raised the portfolio's cash and Safe Haven allocation from 20% to more than 40%.

Markets subsequently rebounded, so our exposure to the Safe Haven group was significantly reduced. In November we saw another downturn but held our nerve.

Sector performance improved through December, January and February, but the war in Iran has shifted momentum. The start of March has been disappointing, so we've reduced our market exposure.

Why we've done what we've done

Cash & Safe Haven – Up from 11% to 19% of the portfolio

During February we reduced our cash holding, but in the last couple of weeks we have increased it in response to a significant rise in market volatility and weaker sector performance.

Slow Ahead – Up from 62% to 63% of the portfolio

We initially increased the amount invested in this group by nearly 6% when we added to our holding in the Premier Miton Cautious Monthly Income fund. However, we subsequently sold the L&G Strategic Bond fund, taking the overall allocation to this group roughly back to where it was this time last month.

Steady as She Goes – Down from 17% to 8% of the portfolio

Following the US–Israeli attack on Iran and the subsequent downturn in global markets, we were happy to sell the IFSL Marlborough UK Micro Cap Growth fund. The UK Smaller Companies sector had dropped to the bottom of the group, and the fund had failed to make any progress since we bought it at the beginning of February. Under more favourable circumstances we might have given it a little longer to prove itself, but we were looking to reduce overall market exposure and this seemed the most obvious solution.

Full Steam Ahead & Specialist – Unchanged at 10% of the portfolio

We have not made any changes to these holdings.

Ocean Liner Portfolio

Objective

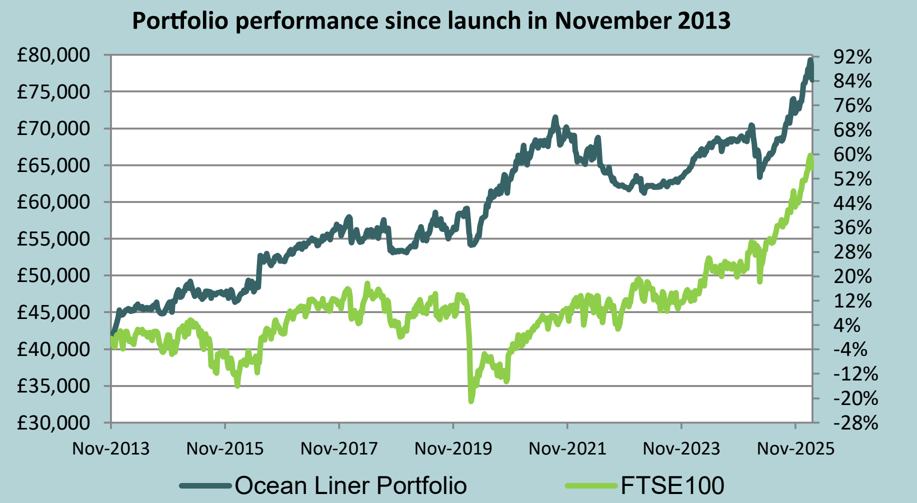
In November 2013 we launched our 'Ocean Liner' Portfolio.

We had been running our cautious 'Tugboat' for three years and wanted to demonstrate how our fund performance data could be used to run a more adventurous portfolio.

Protecting our capital during down-turns is still important, but we accept that if markets drop quickly this portfolio is more likely to suffer losses than the Tugboat. When markets are doing well, we hope to be able to take advantage by having increased exposure to the 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups.

- The overall volatility is limited by keeping at least 30% of the portfolio invested in the 'Slow Ahead' group (or Safe Haven / cash if market conditions are unfavourable).
- We only invest in the more volatile groups when their recent performance justifies it.
- When conditions are favourable, up to 30% of the portfolio can be invested in the most volatile 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups and the 'specialist' sector.

Portfolio Performance



Launched in November 2013, the Ocean Liner portfolio takes a slightly more adventurous approach than Tugboat, which was introduced three years earlier.

Since then, our original investment of just under £41,500 has grown to over £76,000.

Over the last twelve months, this portfolio has risen 15.6%.

Returns

Portfolio Launch Date	23/11/2013	Return in the last 4 weeks	-1.9%
Initial Investment	£41,452	Return in the last 3 months	4.3%
Current Value	£76,606	Return in the last 6 months	10.8%
Return since launch	84.8%	Average Annual Return since launch	5.1%

Current Holdings

Initial Trade Date	Fund Name	Group	Current Price (p)	Current Value (£)	Original Cost (£)	Gain (£)	Gain (%)	Portfolio %
15/05/2025	Artemis Monthly Distribution	Slow	174	£12,295	£10,000	£2,295	23.0%	16.0%
12/06/2025	Royal London Sustainable World	Slow	444	£10,668	£10,000	£668	6.7%	13.9%
18/09/2025	Liontrust Balanced	Slow	303	£10,422	£10,000	£422	4.2%	13.6%
15/01/2026	JOHCM UK Equity Income	Steady	280	£9,902	£10,000	-£98	-1.0%	12.9%
14/08/2025	Fidelity Japan	Developed	978	£6,007	£5,000	£1,007	20.1%	7.8%
10/07/2025	Polar Capital Global Technology	Emerging	14810	£8,137	£5,894	£2,243	38.1%	10.6%
29/01/2026	BG Emerging Markets Growth	Emerging	1393	£2,434	£2,500	-£66	-2.7%	3.2%
11/12/2025	WS Amati Strategic Metals	Specialist	242	£6,417	£5,000	£1,417	28.3%	8.4%
Cash				£10,325				13.5%
Total Portfolio Value				£76,606				

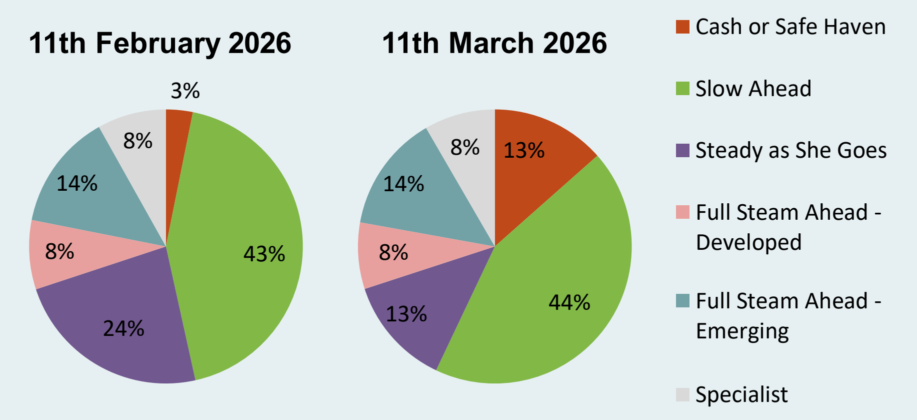
Pending Transactions (these are orders that have been placed, but not yet reflected in the figures above)

Ocean Liner Portfolio

Other transactions this month

Fund	Group	Value (£)	Transaction	Date
Schroder UK Smaller Companies	Steady	£7,880	Sell	05/03/2026

Group Allocation



After last March's 'Liberation Day' correction we increased the Safe Haven allocation from 5% to 30%. As markets recovered, however, cash and Safe Haven holdings fell sharply.

November brought renewed volatility and we trimmed overall market exposure ahead of Christmas, but we were soon almost fully reinvested.

Unfortunately, the recent rise in geopolitical tension has triggered a sell-off in global equity markets, and we have started to increase our cash allocation again.

Why we've done what we've done

Cash & Safe Haven – Up from 3% to 13% of the portfolio

We have only made one change since the last newsletter. We have sold an investment and not replaced it, which has caused our cash holding to rise.

Slow Ahead – Up from 43% to 44% of the portfolio

We haven't made any changes to our holdings in this group.

Steady as She Goes – Down from 24% to 13% of the portfolio

We have sold the Schroder UK Smaller Companies fund. We only held it for a month, during which time the UK Smaller Companies sector went from the top of the group's sector performance table to the bottom. That on its own wouldn't necessarily force a sale – we like to give new funds a chance to get going. However, the fact that it had gone backwards since we initially invested, and that we were happy to reduce our overall exposure to the markets in light of the troubles in the Middle East, sealed its fate..

Full Steam Ahead & Specialist – Unchanged at 30% of the portfolio

We haven't made any changes to the funds we are holding in the 'Full Steam Ahead' groups and the Specialist sector.

Sector Analysis 2026

Every month we publish the Investment Association's average sector performance for the previous month, along with some recent history.

Nearly all sectors made gains in 2025, with only Direct Property and India/Indian Subcontinent failing to make headway.

This year also started well, with most sectors making gains in January. Latin America led the way, up 14.2%, followed by Global Emerging Markets, up 6.8%, and then Asia Pacific ex Japan, up 5.9%.

February was also a good month, with nearly all sectors gaining ground. Japan was the standout, up 11.5%, along with Infrastructure, up 9.1%. The Asia Pacific and Global Emerging Markets sectors also made good progress.

March hasn't started well, with nearly all sectors, apart from the Money Markets, making losses over the first week, but there's still time for a recovery.

Investment Association Sector	2025 Quarterly Returns (%)				2026	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Jan	Feb
Safe Haven						
Standard Money Market	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.3	0.3
Short Term Money Market	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.3	0.3
Slow Ahead						
Mixed Investment 40-85% Shares	-1.2	3.9	5.3	3.3	1.6	3.1
Mixed Investment 20-60% Shares	0.2	3.1	3.8	2.7	1.4	2.6
Mixed Investment 0-35% Shares	0.5	2.3	2.8	2.2	1.0	1.9
£ Corporate Bond	1.0	2.5	0.9	2.4	0.4	1.2
£ Strategic Bond	1.5	2.3	1.8	1.6	0.6	1.0
£ High Yield	1.1	2.4	2.4	1.2	0.5	0.4
Steady as She Goes						
UK Equity Income	1.1	7.8	2.8	5.6	2.7	4.5
UK All Companies	0.1	7.4	3.1	3.9	2.6	3.9
UK Index Linked Gilts	-1.4	0.7	-2.1	3.8	0.6	3.6
Flexible Investment	-1.5	3.8	6.2	3.2	1.7	3.1
Global & GEM Bonds*	0.5	0.6	3.2	1.2	-0.4	2.3
UK Gilts	0.8	1.8	-0.7	3.0	-0.1	2.1
UK Direct Property	0.1	1.3	-2.0	0.4	0.3	0.2
UK Smaller Companies	-7.5	13.1	-0.3	-0.3	5.4	-0.2
Full Steam Ahead - Developed						
Japan	-1.6	5.8	9.5	3.0	3.4	11.5
Global Equity Income	0.2	3.0	5.3	3.8	1.3	5.3
Europe Including UK	5.2	5.7	3.6	5.0	2.1	4.8
Europe Excluding UK	5.5	7.2	3.0	4.9	1.8	4.2
North American Smaller Companies	-12.8	2.5	9.5	2.9	3.0	4.0
Global	-4.7	5.6	7.3	2.7	1.0	3.2
European Smaller Companies	2.4	12.9	1.4	3.3	2.1	2.9
North America	-7.3	4.2	8.2	2.1	-0.6	1.8
Full Steam Ahead - Emerging						
Asia Pacific Including Japan	-2.2	4.3	9.1	2.3	4.8	8.2
Asia Pacific Excluding Japan	-3.1	6.0	12.2	3.6	5.9	8.1
Global Emerging Markets	-1.4	6.0	11.7	4.6	6.8	7.2
China/Greater China	5.7	-2.9	23.8	-3.8	3.2	0.3
Tech & Tech Innovations	-11.3	15.1	11.5	1.4	0.0	0.0
Specialist / Thematic						
Infrastructure	2.5	3.4	2.9	1.4	2.4	9.1
Latin America	8.5	8.7	11.4	5.7	14.2	4.3
India/Indian Subcontinent	-9.2	2.6	-4.4	2.0	-7.9	3.2
Healthcare	-3.5	-6.8	7.2	13.1	-1.3	2.8
Financials and Financial Innovation	-1.8	7.1	5.7	2.2	-1.8	-1.7

* The Global & GEM bonds figure is calculated by taking an average of all the non-UK bond sectors

data source: Morningstar

saltyblog
A PERSONAL VIEW

When geopolitics moves markets

Financial markets like certainty. Unfortunately, the world rarely provides it.

Over the past few weeks, we have once again been reminded how quickly events outside the financial system can influence markets. The war in the Middle East has unsettled investors, triggering a sell-off in global equity markets. While such reactions can feel dramatic, they are not unusual. Stock markets have always responded to wars, political crises and sudden shifts in international relations.

In the short term, investors try to assess what the consequences might be for economic growth, inflation and corporate profits. That uncertainty can increase volatility and cause markets to move sharply.

However, history also shows that markets have faced many shocks before and have usually recovered over time. For long-term investors it often pays to remain disciplined rather than react too quickly to unsettling headlines.

That does not mean ignoring what is happening in the world. Geopolitical events can change sentiment and increase volatility, so it's sensible to review portfolio allocations when conditions become more uncertain. We will continue to monitor the data and adjust our positioning if necessary.

Understanding the Saltydog System

Our Objective

We aim to provide you with up-to-date information about readily available investment funds, so that you can see which are currently performing well. In other words, to provide you with the data that will make DIY Investing a worthwhile hobby.

The Data

We cover Unit Trusts, OEICs, Investment Trusts, and ETFs.

At the beginning of each week we download the latest data, and select the funds that are easy to access in the UK. We then sort the data and highlight the best performing funds.
This sorted data is available to our subscribers on our website (saltydoginvestor.com) each week, and a summary of the data is included in our Newsletter.

To give an example of how our information can be used, we run our own real money portfolios based on the data, and publish details of what we buy and sell, and the overall performance.

We are very ready to help with any queries, but have to emphasise that we are not able to offer any financial advice.

Sectors

All funds are allocated a Sector by the relevant Financial 'body' such as the IA - the Investment Association. That means that all funds within a Sector will be investing within the constraints of that Sector, and so worthwhile comparisons of performance can be made.

Groups

We analysed the Sectors, and decided that it would be helpful to group sectors together according to their historical volatility, so we created Saltydog Groups.

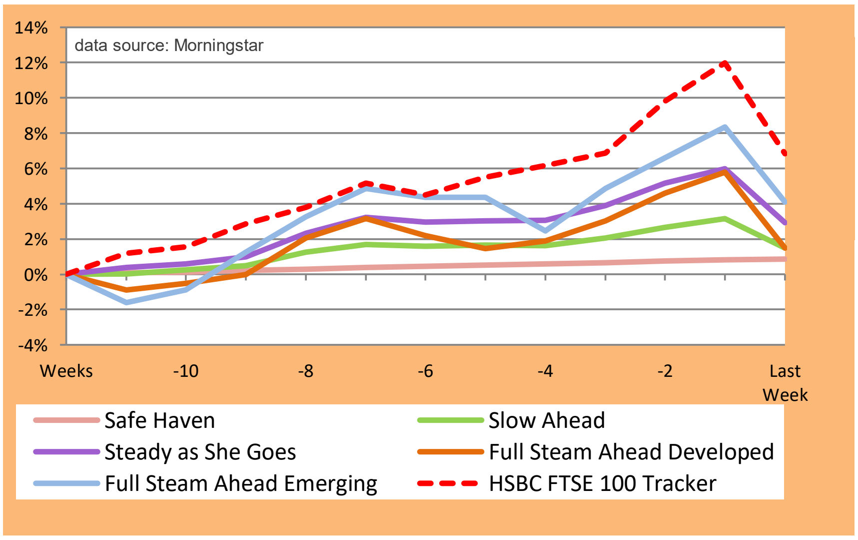
These are:	**Safe Haven:**	Very low risk, but also very low returns.
	Slow Ahead:	Normally a low risk level and often with adequate returns.
	Steady as She Goes:	Generally low to medium risk, with potentially higher returns.
	Full Steam Ahead Developed:	Higher risk, but potentially higher returns.
	Full Steam Ahead Emerging:	Higher risk, but potentially higher returns.

Need more information? Check out the 'How To' guides on our website - saltydoginvestor.com

Let's Get Underway!

The chart below shows how the 5 Saltydog Groups have performed over the last 12 weeks, based on the average of the leading funds in each Sector within the Group, on a week-by-week basis.
In the following pages you can see how the Sectors have performed within the Groups, and the funds that have performed best in each of the Sectors.

Saltydog Group Comparison

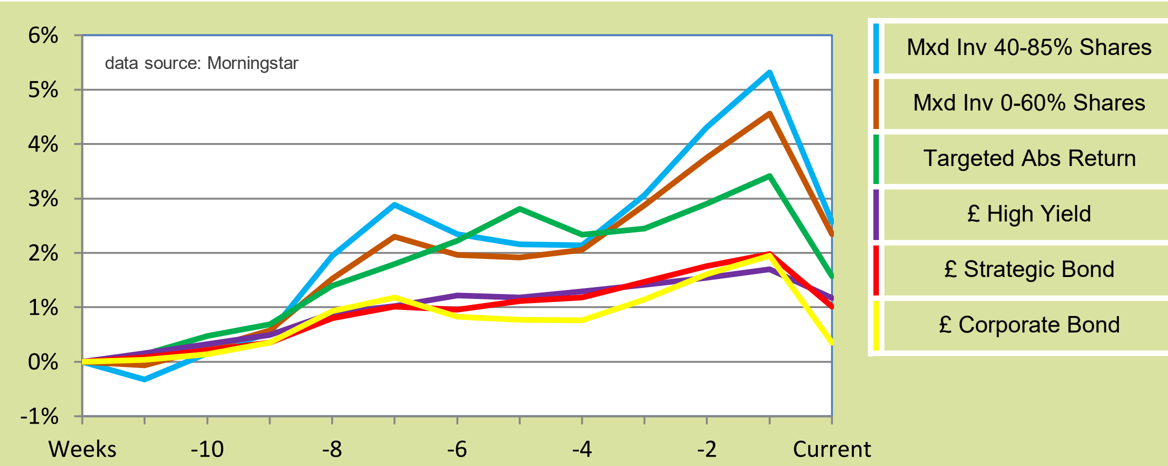


Group Performance for Last Week

Safe Haven	0.05%
Slow Ahead	-1.6%
Steady as She Goes	-3.1%
Full Steam Ahead Developed	-4.3%
Full Steam Ahead Emerging	-4.3%
HSBC FTSE 100 Tracker	-5.1%

A bleak set of figures and a bleak chart, with the HSBC FTSE 100 Tracker down 5% and all our Groups (except Safe Haven) negative last week.

Performance by Saltydog Group - Slow Ahead



This chart shows the relative performance of the sectors in this Group, calculated by looking at the average % return of the leading funds in each sector every week. In the table below the sectors are ranked by their four-week % return. All the return data is shaded to highlight the higher figures in each column.

Sector	Percentage Return Data										
	4wks	12wks	26wks	Wk -1	Wk -2	Wk -3	Wk -4	Wk -5	Wk -6	Wk -7	Wk -8
Mxd Inv 40-85% Shares	**0.4%**	2.5%	7.3%	-2.7%	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	0.0%	-0.2%	-0.5%	0.9%
Mxd Inv 0-60% Shares	**0.3%**	2.3%	6.0%	-2.2%	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	-0.3%	0.8%
£ High Yield	**-0.1%**	1.2%	2.4%	-0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
£ Strategic Bond	**-0.2%**	1.1%	2.7%	-1.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	-0.1%	0.2%
£ Corporate Bond	**-0.4%**	0.4%	3.2%	-1.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.4%	0.2%
Targeted Abs Return	**-0.8%**	1.5%	3.9%	-1.8%	0.5%	0.5%	0.1%	-0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%
Average:	*-0.1%*	*1.5%*	*4.3%*	*-1.6%*	*0.5%*	*0.6%*	*0.4%*	*0.0%*	*0.1%*	*-0.1%*	*0.5%*

The Mixed Investment Sectors

These are the Flexible Investment, Mixed Investment 40-85% Shares, Mixed Investment 20-60% Shares, and the Mixed Investment 0-35% Shares sectors. There are so few funds in the 0-35% sector that we have combined them with the Mixed Investment 20-60% Shares and called them ‘Mxd Inv 0-60% Shares’.

These sectors can hold a combination of equities and fixed interest assets, and it’s down to the fund manager to vary the proportions. They replaced the old Active, Balanced, and Cautious Managed sectors.

Overall Group Performance

This group’s average four-week return was a gain of 1.3% in the January newsletter, and last month it was up 0.4%. This month it has fallen by 0.1%.

All sectors in this group went up last year, with annual returns ranging from 7.0% for £ Corporate Bonds to 11.6% for Mixed Investment 40–85% Shares.

However, the year started slowly. Most sectors rose in the first quarter, with three-month returns of just 0.1% to 1.5%. The Mixed Investment 40–85% Shares sector fell by 1.2%. Performance improved through the second and third quarters, when all sectors moved higher, and the momentum continued in the final quarter. The Mixed Investment sectors set the pace.

In January’s newsletter, all sectors were up over four, twelve and twenty-six weeks. Mixed Investment 40–85% Shares led the way with a four-week return of 2.0%.

Last month, overall returns were more subdued and one sector was showing a loss over the previous four weeks. Targeted Absolute Return was at the top, with a four-week return of 0.9%.
This month, only the two Mixed Investment sectors are still showing four-week gains, although all sectors remain up over twelve and twenty-six weeks.

About the ‘Slow Ahead’ Group ...

Unit Trust and OEICs are already allocated IA sectors which determine what they can invest in. To bring together sectors of similar historic volatility, so that they can be analysed, we have created the Saltydog Groups.

The least volatile is the ‘Safe Haven’. These are basically deposit accounts - performance data is only available on the website.

Next is the ‘Slow Ahead’ Group. Funds in this Group are normally relatively low risk, but can often deliver adequate returns.

Within the 'Slow Ahead' Group you will find sectors investing in bonds and gilts. Bond prices go up and down like share prices, but are usually less extreme.

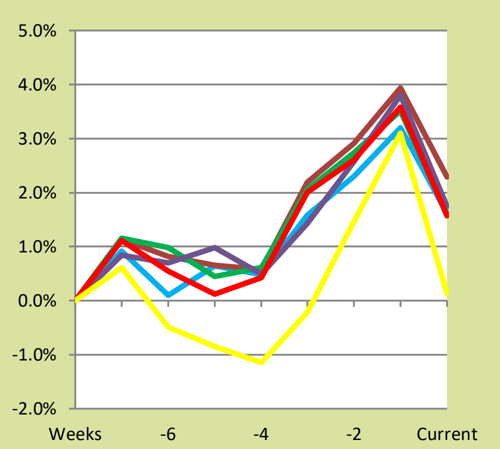
There are also some of the mixed investment sectors which invest in a combination of bonds and shares.

The 'Targeted Absolute Returns' funds are also in this Group and they aim to deliver positive returns in any market conditions. Typically funds in this sector would normally expect to generate absolute returns on a 12 month basis.

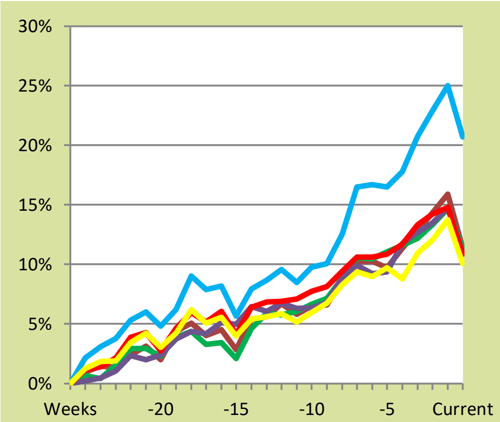
Back in pole position

The Mixed Investment 40–85% Shares sector was at the bottom of the table in last April's newsletter but climbed to first place by May and held the top spot for the next five months. It slipped to second in November and fourth in December, before regaining first place in January. In last month's newsletter it had dropped to fifth place, but it is now back in the lead, although only with a 0.4% four-week gain.

Similar listings are available for all sectors in the members area of the website.



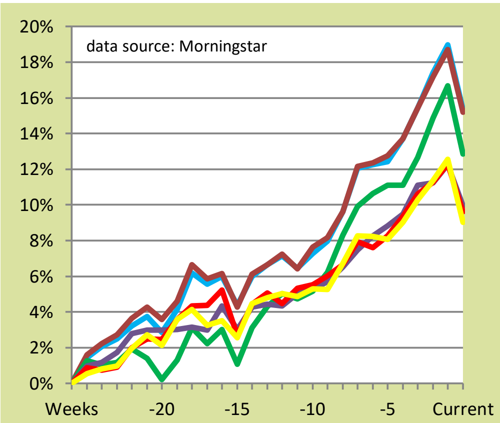
Mxd Inv 40-85% Shares	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	**Ret**	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Baillie Gifford Sustainable Inc	1	**1.1%**	1	4.1%	4	5.2%	4	3	4	2	9	1	10	2
M&S Worldwide Mgd	1	**1.7%**	1	3.8%	1	10.0%	5	2	4	1	8	8	6	2
Liontrust MA Explorer 85	1	**0.9%**	1	3.9%	2	7.7%	6	4	4	1	4	10	4	1
abrdn Global Balanced Growth	1	**1.2%**	2	2.9%	2	9.1%	7	2	3	3	9	2	4	3
7IM Moderately Advent	1	**1.1%**	2	3.7%	2	8.7%	7	2	5	1	3	10	9	2
BNY Mellon Mlt-Asst Balanced	1	**1.2%**	3	2.2%	2	7.4%	9	1	1	3	9	9	10	4



Mxd Inv 40-85% Shares	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	**Dec**	**Ret**	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Premier Miton MA Gr & Inc	1	2.5%	1	10.2%	1	**20.7%**	10	1	1	1	1	8	2	1
Jupiter Merlin Balanced,	5	0.0%	1	4.4%	1	**11.3%**	10	1	2	1	1	10	2	1
IFSL Wise Multi-Asset Income	7	-0.2%	1	5.2%	1	**11.3%**	9	2	3	5	2	1	3	1
Vanguard ActLife ClAwr 60-70% Eq	10	-0.7%	1	3.9%	1	**11.0%**	10	2	4	3	1	3	9	2
Man Balanced Managed	10	-0.8%	2	3.7%	1	**10.8%**	10	5	4	1	1	3	2	2
Schroder Managed Balanced	1	1.2%	1	3.9%	1	**10.1%**	10	1	3	1	10	1	6	2

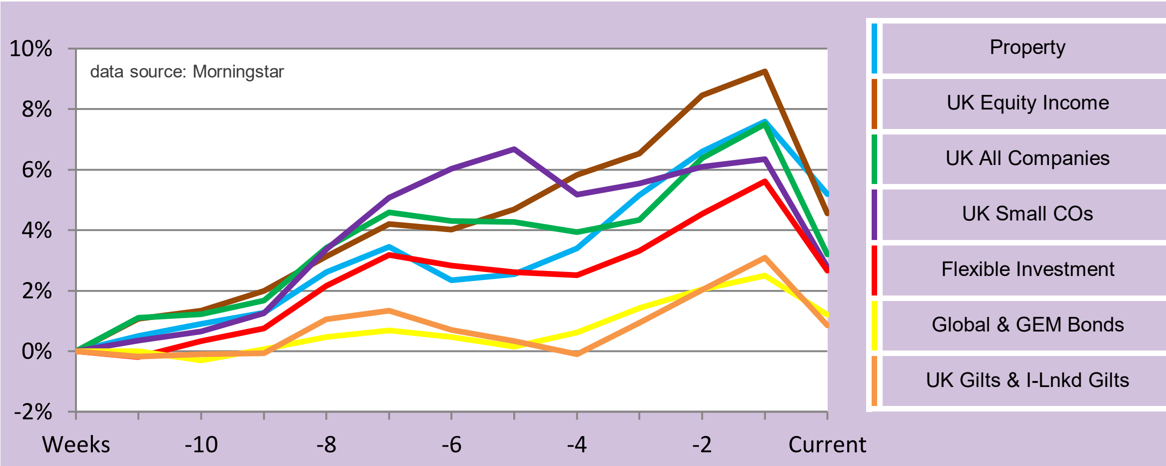
Another month as runner-up

In our analysis, we combine the Mixed Investment 0–35% Shares and Mixed Investment 20–60% Shares sectors under the heading Mixed Investment 0–60% Shares. The sector was second in October, up 1.5%, and again in November, although its four-week return eased to 0.9%. It slipped to fifth in December, with a 0.5% gain, before climbing back to second in January with another 1.5% return. Last month it was still second, although the four-week gain had eased to 0.5%. Since then it has risen by 0.3% and remains second.



Mxd Inv 0-60% Shares	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	**Dec**	**Ret**	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Premier Miton Cau Mthly Inc	1	1.4%	1	7.6%	1	**15.3%**	9	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Premier Miton Cautious Multi Asset	1	1.3%	1	7.4%	1	**15.2%**	9	1	2	1	1	2	1	1
Artemis Monthly Distribution	1	1.6%	1	7.4%	1	**12.8%**	10	1	1	1	7	1	1	1
Schroder MM Diversity	3	0.4%	1	5.4%	1	**9.9%**	7	3	10	1	2	1	1	2
Margetts Providence Strat	4	0.3%	1	4.9%	1	**9.6%**	8	3	5	2	1	1	6	1
Jupiter Merlin Income,	5	0.0%	1	3.8%	2	**9.0%**	9	2	3	2	1	8	3	1

Performance by Saltydog Group - Steady as She Goes



This chart shows the relative performance of the sectors in this Group, calculated by looking at the average % return of the leading funds in each sector every week. In the table below the sectors are ranked by their four-week % return. All the return data is shaded to highlight the higher figures in each column.

Sector	Percentage Return Data										
	4wks	12wks	26wks	Wk -1	Wk -2	Wk -3	Wk -4	Wk -5	Wk -6	Wk -7	Wk -8
Property	**1.7%**	5.6%	6.3%	-2.4%	1.0%	1.4%	1.8%	0.9%	0.2%	-1.1%	0.8%
UK Gilts & I-Lnkd Gilts	**0.9%**	0.8%	4.7%	-2.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	-0.4%	-0.4%	-0.6%	0.3%
Global & GEM Bonds	**0.6%**	1.2%	3.3%	-1.3%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	0.5%	-0.3%	-0.2%	0.2%
Flexible Investment	**0.1%**	2.5%	7.7%	-3.0%	1.1%	1.2%	0.8%	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.4%	1.0%
UK All Companies	**-0.9%**	3.2%	6.1%	-4.3%	1.1%	2.0%	0.4%	-0.3%	0.0%	-0.3%	1.2%
UK Equity Income	**-1.4%**	4.5%	9.7%	-4.7%	0.8%	1.9%	0.7%	1.1%	0.7%	-0.2%	1.1%
UK Small COs	**-2.4%**	2.7%	2.4%	-3.6%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	-1.5%	0.7%	0.9%	1.7%
Average:	*-0.2%*	*2.9%*	*5.8%*	*-3.1%*	*0.8%*	*1.3%*	*0.8%*	*0.0%*	*0.1%*	*-0.3%*	*0.9%*

The Property Sectors

The Investment Association has two different property sectors that we put together for our analysis. There's quite a lot of 'small print', but the basic definitions are:

UK Direct Property

Funds which invest an average of at least 70% of their assets directly in UK property over 5 year rolling periods.

Property Other

Funds which predominantly invest in property and do not meet the requirements of the UK Direct Property sector.

Overall Group Performance

The four-week average return for the sectors in this group was a gain of 2.3% in the January newsletter and 0.8% last month. This month it is down 0.2%.

Only one sector went down in 2025 - UK Direct Property with a 0.2% loss. The best-performing sector was UK Equity Income, up 18.4%, followed by UK All Companies, up 15.2%.

The first quarter was the weakest. UK Equity Income led, up just 1.1%. UK Smaller Companies, Flexible Investment and UK Gilts & Index-Linked Gilts also edged lower. In the next three months UK Smaller Companies recovered, gaining 13.1%, and the other sectors also moved higher.

In the third quarter only four sectors made progress. Flexible Investment led, up 6.2%. UK Smaller Companies slipped again and was also the only sector to fall in the fourth quarter.

By January's newsletter, all sectors were up over four weeks, with the three UK equity sectors leading the way. Last month, only the UK Gilts sector went down. The best-performing sector was UK Equity Income with a four-week return of 2.7%.

This month Property has leapfrogged to the top of the table, and the three UK equity sectors are now showing losses over the last four weeks.

A bit about the 'Steady as She Goes' Group ...

The sectors in this Group have historically been more volatile than those in the 'Slow Ahead' Group, but when conditions are favourable they can give better returns.

In this Group there are some bond sectors, as well as the Flexible Investment sector, which invests in both bonds and equities. It is one of the mixed asset sectors renamed at the end of 2011, previously known as the Cautious, Balanced, and Active Managed sectors. These are often the 'default' funds for many financial products.

There's also the UK Equity Income sector. The income funds invest in shares that pay good dividends, and are less focused on capital growth. These tend to be the large, well known businesses like the banks, supermarkets, oil, utilities, and pharmaceutical companies.

The UK All Companies and UK Smaller Companies sectors are in this Group. Although they invest in UK Companies it's worth remembering that those companies are often international.

A full list of the sector definitions is available on the Investment Association website.

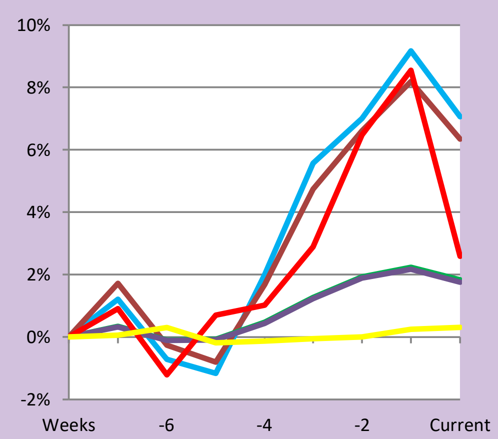
www.theinvestmentassociation.org

Performance by Saltydog Group - Steady as She Goes

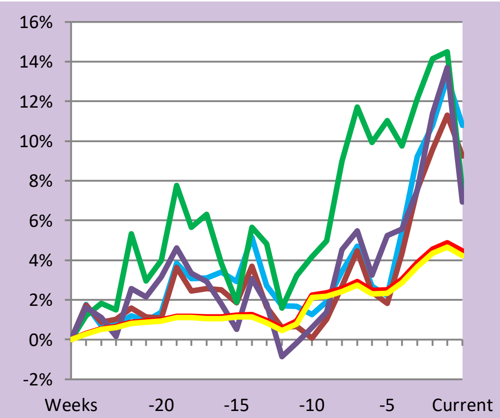
A new leader of the pack

The Property sector was in fourth place in the January newsletter, with a four-week return of 2.6%. It edged up to third place in February, even though it had only risen by 0.9% in the previous four weeks. Since then, it has gained a further 1.7% and moved to the top of the table.

Similar listings are available for all sectors in the members area of the website.



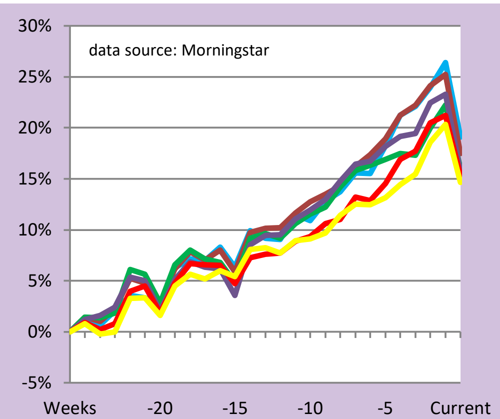
Property	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
First Sentier Glbl Prpty Secs	**1**	**5.1%**	1	8.9%	3	10.8%	2	1	6	1	1	8	10	5
iShares Envir&Lw Carb Tilt	**1**	**4.7%**	1	8.6%	4	9.2%	2	3	4	1	1	9	10	2
abrdn Global Real Estate Inst	**2**	**1.4%**	5	3.8%	7	4.5%	1	8	9	4	4	6	6	8
abrdn Global Real Estate	**2**	**1.3%**	5	3.8%	7	4.2%	1	8	9	4	4	6	6	9
Premier Miton Pan Eurp Prop Shr	**2**	**1.3%**	1	7.9%	5	6.9%	10	1	1	1	5	1	10	6
CT UK Commercial Property	**3**	**0.4%**	9	0.3%	9	1.2%	1	9	10	8	6	8	3	10



Property	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
First Sentier Glbl Prpty Secs	1	5.1%	1	8.9%	**3**	**10.8%**	2	1	6	1	1	8	10	5
iShares Envir&Lw Carb Tilt	1	4.7%	1	8.6%	**4**	**9.2%**	2	3	4	1	1	9	10	2
abrdn UK Real Estate Share	8	-2.0%	2	5.8%	**5**	**7.5%**	10	8	5	1	8	2	10	1
Premier Miton Pan Eurp Prop Shr	2	1.3%	1	7.9%	**5**	**6.9%**	10	1	1	1	5	1	10	6
abrdn Global Real Estate Inst	2	1.4%	5	3.8%	**7**	**4.5%**	1	8	9	4	4	6	6	8
abrdn Global Real Estate	2	1.3%	5	3.8%	**7**	**4.2%**	1	8	9	4	4	6	6	9

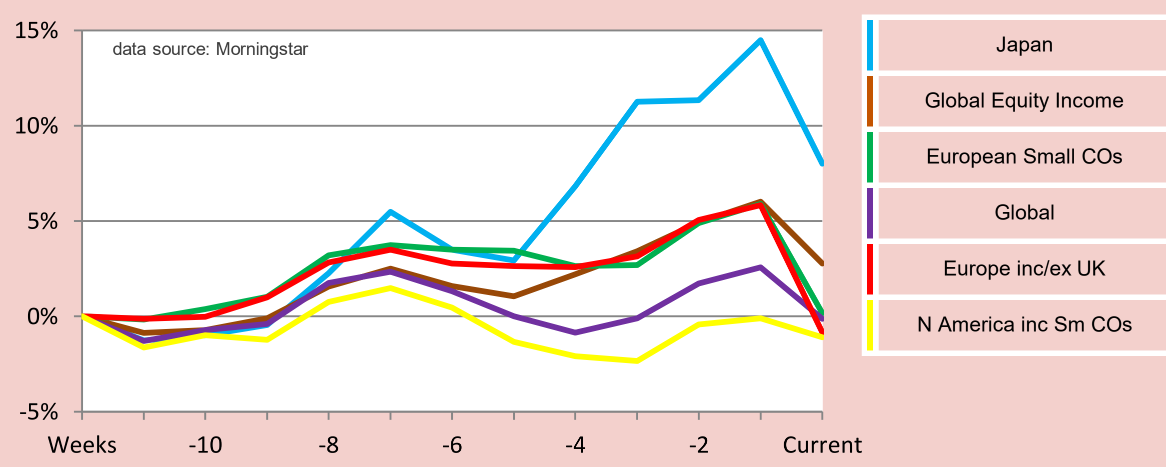
Last month's top dog

UK Equity Income was third in the November newsletter, with a four-week return of 0.9%. It moved to the top of the table in December, up 1.3%, but slipped back to third in January despite gaining 3.2% over the previous four weeks. Last month it returned to the lead with a 2.7% gain, but over the last four weeks it has fallen 1.4% and dropped to sixth place.



UK Equity Income	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Vanguard FTSE U.K. Equity Inc Idx	8	-1.7%	1	9.2%	**1**	**19.1%**	10	1	6	5	1	1	4	3
Man Income Professional	9	-3.1%	2	6.6%	**1**	**17.5%**	10	5	6	4	1	1	2	2
RGI UK Equity Income	7	-1.2%	2	6.3%	**1**	**16.0%**	9	2	3	9	4	4	3	4
JOHCM UK Equity Income	9	-2.9%	3	5.7%	**1**	**15.8%**	10	6	2	8	3	1	3	3
UBS UK Equity Inc	7	-1.3%	1	7.1%	**1**	**15.4%**	8	7	2	5	1	1	6	1
Rathbone Income	3	0.2%	2	6.4%	**1**	**14.7%**	8	3	2	3	2	3	4	6

Performance for the Full Steam Ahead Developed Group



This chart shows the relative performance of the sectors in this Group, calculated by looking at the average % return of the leading funds in each sector every week. In the table below, the sectors are ranked by their four-week % return. All the return data is shaded to highlight the higher figures in each column.

Sector	Percentage Return Data										
	4wks	12wks	26wks	Wk -1	Wk -2	Wk -3	Wk -4	Wk -5	Wk -6	Wk -7	Wk -8
N America inc Sm COs	**1.0%**	-1.2%	4.9%	-1.0%	0.3%	1.9%	-0.2%	-0.8%	-1.8%	-1.0%	0.7%
Japan	**0.8%**	7.7%	14.0%	-6.5%	3.1%	0.1%	4.4%	3.9%	-0.6%	-2.0%	3.2%
Global	**0.7%**	-0.2%	5.2%	-2.7%	0.8%	1.8%	0.7%	-0.9%	-1.3%	-1.0%	0.6%
Global Equity Income	**0.5%**	2.7%	7.7%	-3.2%	1.1%	1.5%	1.2%	1.2%	-0.5%	-0.9%	0.9%
European Small COs	**-2.7%**	-0.1%	2.7%	-5.7%	1.0%	2.2%	0.0%	-0.8%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.5%
Europe inc/ex UK	**-3.6%**	-1.1%	4.5%	-6.7%	0.8%	1.9%	0.6%	-0.1%	-0.1%	-0.7%	0.7%
Average:	*-0.6%*	*1.3%*	*6.5%*	*-4.3%*	*1.2%*	*1.6%*	*1.1%*	*0.4%*	*-0.7%*	*-1.0%*	*1.1%*

North American Sectors

The Investment Association has two sectors specially designed for funds focusing on North America.

The North America sector for:

Funds which invest at least 80% of their assets in North American equities.

And the more specific North American Smaller Companies Fund for:

Funds which invest at least 80% of their assets in North American equities of companies which form the bottom 20% by market capitalisation.

We combine these two sectors for our analysis.

Overall Group Performance

In January's newsletter, the group's average four-week return was a gain of 2.1%, but last month it was a decline of 0.2%. This month, it is showing a further loss of 0.6%.

Last year, all sectors in this group made gains. Europe excluding UK was the best performer, with an annual return of 22.2%.

The year began well, with all sectors up in January. However, by the end of the first quarter, Global, Japan and North America were all showing losses. All sectors moved higher in the second quarter, though North America remained down over the first six months of the year.

The third quarter brought gains of 3.0% to 9.5%, led by Japan and North America. The momentum continued in the fourth quarter, with returns ranging from 2.1% in North America to almost 5.0% in the Europe including UK sector.

In January's newsletter, all sectors were up over four weeks, with the European sectors setting the pace. Last month, Japan took the lead, up 4.5%, followed by Global Equity Income, up 0.7%. The remaining sectors were down over four weeks.

This month, America leads, followed by Japan and the global sectors. The European sectors have posted four-week losses.

The sectors in the 'Full Steam Ahead Developed' Group ...

The sectors in the 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups have historically been the most volatile.

They can give the best returns when conditions are favourable, but are also likely to suffer the most if market conditions take a turn for the worse.

There are a lot of sectors which we consider 'Full Steam Ahead' and so we have split them into two groups to make analysis easier.

The 'Developed' Group focuses on sectors which are usually considered 'Developed' Markets. These are the UK, Europe, North America, and Japan.

The European funds are split into Europe including the UK, and Europe excluding UK, but we have joined them and called it Europe inc / ex UK - an oxymoron, but hopefully now it makes sense.

The North America and North American Smaller Companies sectors have also been combined.

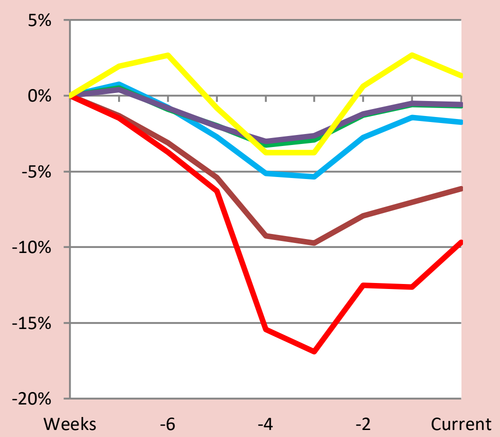
We also include the 'Property' sector in this Group.

Performance of the Full Steam Ahead Developed Group

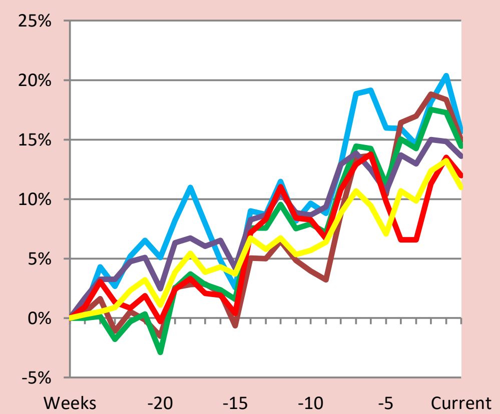
From last to first

The combined North America and North American Smaller Companies sector was at the bottom of the table in the January newsletter after rising 0.7% in the previous four weeks. The following month it was still there, but its four-week return had turned into a loss of 2.9%. Over the last four weeks it has gained 1.0% and jumped to the top of the table.

Similar listings are available for all sectors in the members area of the website



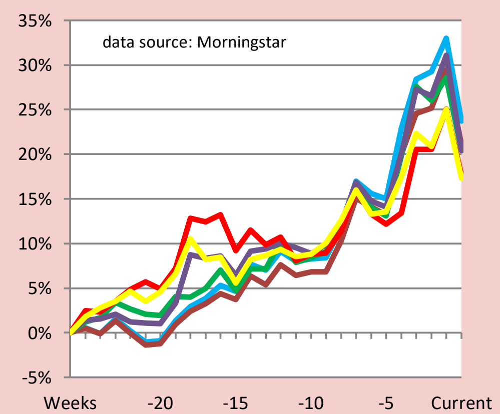
N America inc Sm COs	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	**Ret**	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Marlborough US Multi-Cap Income	1	**3.4%**	8	-2.7%	9	-1.2%	1	3	2	8	9	9	8	6
T. Rowe Price US Lg Cap Gth Eq	1	**3.1%**	10	-6.6%	9	-1.5%	1	5	5	9	10	9	9	10
Janus H'son USA Enhanced Eq	1	**2.6%**	6	-0.7%	5	6.5%	1	6	6	6	8	6	8	6
HSBC American Index	1	**2.5%**	6	-0.6%	5	6.6%	1	6	7	6	7	7	6	7
Baillie Gifford USA.	1	**5.7%**	10	-11.1%	10	-14.9%	1	9	1	10	10	9	10	10
CT US Smaller Companies	1	**5.1%**	4	0.8%	2	12.0%	2	2	1	8	9	10	1	2



N America inc Sm COs	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	**Dec**	**Ret**	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Artemis US Smaller Companies	6	-0.2%	2	3.7%	1	**15.7%**	6	2	1	10	5	10	1	1
FTF Royce US Smaller Companies	7	-1.3%	1	7.9%	1	**14.9%**	5	10	6	6	1	10	1	1
Schroder US Mid Cap	6	-0.5%	2	4.5%	2	**14.4%**	4	10	1	9	1	10	2	1
M&G USA Value	5	-0.1%	3	2.8%	2	**13.6%**	2	9	5	9	2	8	7	5
CT US Smaller Companies	1	5.1%	4	0.8%	2	**12.0%**	2	2	1	8	9	10	1	2
Fidelity USA Sp Situ.	5	0.3%	2	4.0%	2	**11.0%**	3	6	3	9	1	9	6	2

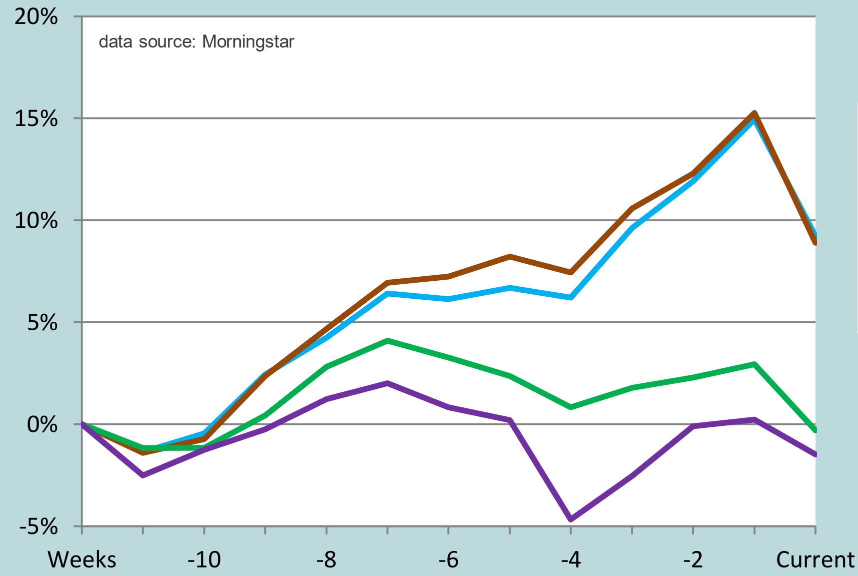
From first to second

Japan was top of the table in the August newsletter with a 7.4% four-week gain, before slipping to second in September despite rising a further 1.6%. Its return slowed to 0.2% in October, leaving it at the bottom of the table, but by November it had reclaimed the lead with a 3.6% gain. It fell back to the bottom in December after a 0.1% loss, climbed to third in January, up 2.2%, and last month returned to the top with a 4.5% four-week gain. This month it has slipped one place to second, up 0.8% over four weeks.



Japan	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
	Dec	Ret	Dec	Ret	**Dec**	**Ret**	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
WS Morant Wright Nippon Yield	5	0.6%	1	13.4%	1	**23.7%**	9	1	9	1	1	4	6	1
WS Morant Wright Japan	4	0.9%	1	12.5%	1	**21.1%**	9	1	10	1	1	5	4	1
Man Japan CoreAlpha	5	0.5%	1	9.2%	1	**20.4%**	9	2	10	1	1	5	10	1
Fidelity Japan.	5	0.3%	1	9.4%	1	**20.4%**	10	1	10	1	1	4	9	1
abrdn Japanese Equity	1	3.7%	2	6.2%	1	**17.6%**	8	1	10	1	3	6	10	1
M&G Japan	6	-0.1%	1	7.3%	1	**17.3%**	8	1	10	1	1	2	10	1

Performance for the Full Steam Ahead Emerging Group



This chart shows the relative performance of the sectors in this Group, calculated by looking at the average % return of the leading funds in each sector every week. In the table below the sectors are ranked by their 4 week % return. All the return data is shaded to highlight the higher figures in each column.

Sector	Percentage Return Data										
	4wks	12wks	26wks	Wk -1	Wk -2	Wk -3	Wk -4	Wk -5	Wk -6	Wk -7	Wk -8
Tech & Tech Innovations	**3.2%**	-2.0%	8.4%	-1.7%	0.3%	2.4%	2.1%	-4.9%	-0.6%	-1.2%	0.8%
Asia Pacific inc/ex Japan	**2.8%**	9.4%	18.7%	-5.7%	3.0%	2.3%	3.4%	-0.5%	0.6%	-0.3%	2.2%
Gbl Emerging Markets	**1.2%**	8.9%	20.5%	-6.4%	3.0%	1.7%	3.1%	-0.8%	1.0%	0.3%	2.3%
China/Greater China	**-1.0%**	-0.2%	3.3%	-3.2%	0.7%	0.5%	0.9%	-1.5%	-0.9%	-0.8%	1.3%
Average:	*1.6%*	*4.0%*	*12.7%*	*-4.3%*	*1.7%*	*1.7%*	*2.4%*	*-1.9%*	*0.0%*	*-0.5%*	*1.6%*

Tech & Tech Innovation

This is one of the more specialist sectors, defined by the Investment Association as:

"Funds that invest at least 80% of their assets in equities of technology and related sectors, including industries such as telecommunications, robotics and online retailers"

We include it in our 'Full Steam Ahead - Emerging' Group because of its historic volatility, and for the practical reason that there aren't many other sectors in this Group.

In terms of investment, these funds will probably be predominantly invested in the United States.

Overall Group Performance

The group's four-week average was a gain of 3.2% in the January newsletter but a loss of 0.8% last month. This month it has risen by 1.6%.

China/Greater China was the best-performing sector in 2025, up 22.4%, although the other three sectors also made gains.

In the first quarter China rose by 5.7%, while the other sectors slipped – Technology fell by 11.3%. However, in the next three months China declined, while the remaining sectors edged higher. Technology rose by 15.1%.

The third quarter was the strongest period of the year. Even the weakest sector gained 9.1%, while China climbed 23.8%. The final quarter was more muted. Asia Pacific was the best-performing sector, up 3.6%, while China, the worst, fell by 3.7%.

All sectors were showing gains in the January newsletter, with Global Emerging Markets leading, up 4.7% in four weeks. Last month the order was unchanged, but returns were lower. Global Emerging Markets was up just 2.8%, while Technology had fallen by 5.8%.

This month the Technology sector has moved into the lead, up 3.2%. Only the Chinese sector is down over the last four weeks.

The sectors in the 'Full Steam Ahead Emerging' Group ...

The sectors in the 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups have historically been the most volatile.

They can give the best returns when conditions are favourable, but are also likely to suffer the most if market conditions take a turn for the worse.

There are a lot of sectors which we consider to be 'Full Steam Ahead' and so we have split them into two groups to make analysis easier.

The 'Emerging' Group focuses on sectors which are usually considered 'Emerging' Markets. These are Asia Pacific, China & Greater China, and Global Emerging Markets.

The Asia Pacific funds are split into those including Japan and those not including Japan - we have joined the two sectors and called it Asia Pacific inc / ex Japan.

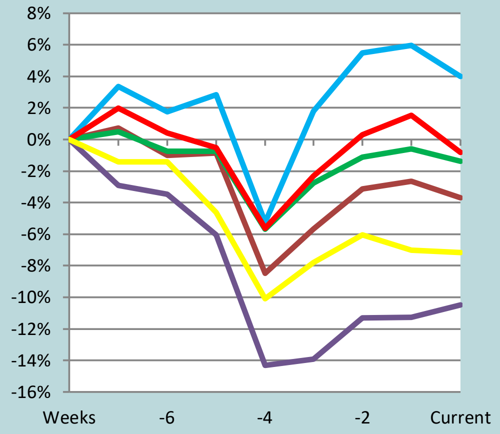
The 'Technology & Technology Innovations' sector is also in this Group. It may not fit exactly with our 'Emerging Markets' theme, but the funds have a similar level of volatility, and so we put it into the 'Full Steam Ahead' Group with the fewest other sectors.

Performance of the Full Steam Ahead Emerging Group

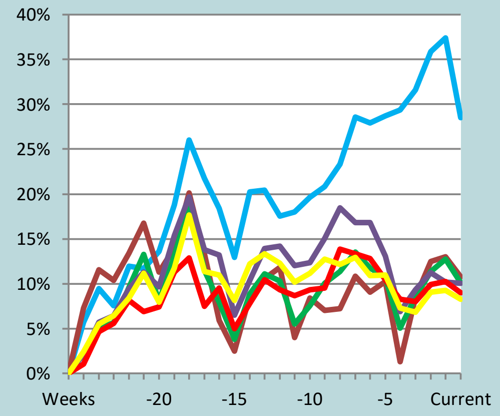
Regaining the lead

The Technology sector topped the table in the early summer newsletters, finishing first in May, June and July. It slipped to second in August before dropping to last in September. A 7.5% rise in October briefly pushed it back into the lead, but a 0.1% decline the following month saw it return to the foot of the table. Despite a further 0.3% loss it recovered to second in December. However, by January it had slipped back to the bottom, even though it had risen 1.2% over the previous four weeks. Last month it remained there after a much larger 5.8% drop. Over the last four weeks it has risen by 3.2% and is back at the top of the table.

Similar listings are available for all sectors in the members area of the website.



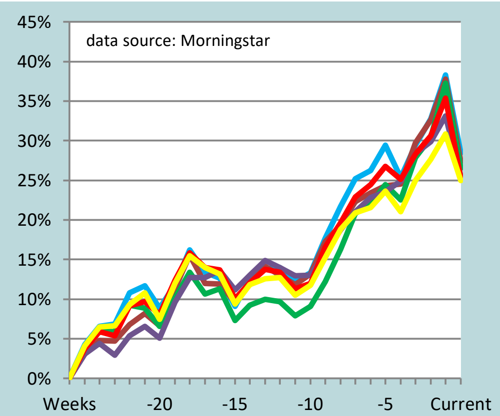
Tech & Tech Innovations	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Liontrust Global Technology	1	9.3%	9	-1.0%	7	10.8%	1	8	1	1	10	3	9	1
AXA Fram Global Technology	1	4.8%	10	-5.6%	8	4.1%	1	9	2	6	10	7	10	9
Janus H'son Gbl Technology	2	4.3%	9	-1.7%	8	6.8%	1	8	7	5	10	7	9	10
Pictet Digital	2	3.9%	10	-9.6%	10	-6.1%	1	10	2	9	10	10	7	10
T. Rowe Price Global Tech	2	4.8%	8	-0.2%	7	10.1%	2	8	2	4	10	9	9	6
Pictet Robotics	4	2.9%	10	-3.6%	7	10.0%	1	10	6	7	10	10	4	10



Tech & Tech Innovations	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Polar Capital Global Technology	9	-0.7%	4	9.4%	1	28.5%	8	8	1	8	2	5	7	1
Liontrust Global Technology	1	9.3%	9	-1.0%	7	10.8%	1	8	1	1	10	3	9	1
T. Rowe Price Global Tech	2	4.8%	8	-0.2%	7	10.1%	2	8	2	4	10	9	9	6
Pictet Robotics	4	2.9%	10	-3.6%	7	10.0%	1	10	6	7	10	10	4	10
Fidelity Global Technology	7	0.7%	8	-0.3%	8	9.0%	1	9	7	10	8	10	6	10
L&G Global Tech Index	7	0.9%	10	-3.6%	8	8.3%	1	9	4	10	10	7	10	9

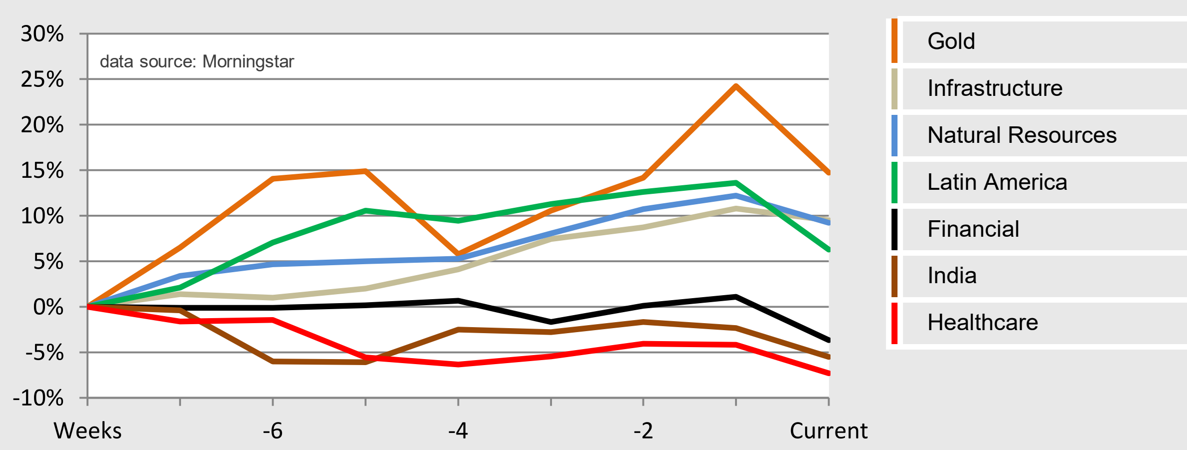
Losing the lead after four months at the top

The Global Emerging Markets sector began climbing the rankings after the August newsletter, when it was last despite a 2.9% four-week gain. It rose to second in September after adding a further 2.3%, and remained there in October with a 4.8% return. By November it had moved into first place with a 2.0% gain. It held the top spot in December despite a 0.3% loss, and continued to lead in January with a 4.7% return. It then gained a further 2.8% to remain at the top of the table last month. This month it has slipped to third with a 1.2% return.



Gbl Emerging Markets	4 Week Dec	4 Week Ret	12 Week Dec	12 Week Ret	26 Week Dec	26 Week Ret	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
Baillie Gifford Em Mkts Growth	4	2.5%	2	12.7%	1	28.4%	9	1	2	4	9	1	2	2
Invesco Em Mkts ex China	4	2.3%	2	12.6%	1	27.3%	10	2	4	2	2	4	2	3
Liontrust Emerging Mkts	3	3.2%	1	15.4%	2	26.5%	10	1	5	2	7	1	2	1
Lazard Emerging Mkts	8	0.5%	3	10.1%	2	25.5%	6	6	8	6	1	5	1	6
FTF Templeton Gbl Emerg Markets	8	0.2%	2	10.5%	2	25.3%	10	2	7	6	7	1	1	2
JPM Emerging Mkts	3	3.2%	2	10.9%	2	25.0%	4	5	4	5	8	1	2	7

Performance of the Saltydog SubZones



This chart shows the relative performance of the different SubZones that we have created to help make sense of this sector. In the table below the SubZones are ranked by their 4 week % return. All the return data is shaded to highlight the higher figures in each column.

SubZone	Percentage Return Data										
	4wks	12wks	26wks	Wk -1	Wk -2	Wk -3	Wk -4	Wk -5	Wk -6	Wk -7	Wk -8
Gold	9.2%	18.5%	67.6%	-9.5%	10.1%	3.6%	4.8%	-9.1%	0.8%	7.6%	6.5%
Infrastructure	5.4%	10.5%	14.0%	-1.3%	2.1%	1.3%	3.3%	2.1%	1.0%	-0.4%	1.4%
Natural Resources	3.9%	12.9%	24.7%	-3.0%	1.5%	2.6%	2.8%	0.3%	0.3%	1.3%	3.4%
Healthcare	-1.1%	-3.6%	7.9%	-3.1%	-0.1%	1.4%	0.9%	-0.8%	-4.1%	0.2%	-1.6%
India	-3.0%	-7.2%	-8.2%	-3.2%	-0.7%	1.1%	-0.3%	3.6%	-0.1%	-5.6%	-0.4%
Latin America	-3.4%	9.2%	22.8%	-7.3%	1.0%	1.3%	1.9%	-1.1%	3.5%	5.0%	2.1%
Financial	-4.4%	-2.1%	3.6%	-4.8%	1.0%	1.8%	-2.3%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%	-0.1%
Average:	*0.8%*	*4.8%*	*16.6%*	*-4.0%*	*1.9%*	*1.6%*	*1.4%*	*-0.6%*	*0.2%*	*1.0%*	*1.4%*

Overall Performance

Last month, the SubZone four-week average was a gain of 1.9%, and it has risen by a further 0.8% over the past four weeks.

The standout funds last year came from our Specialist SubZones. The 'gold' funds delivered exceptional results, with annual returns ranging from 147% to 185%. The WS Amati Strategic Metals fund was not far behind, up 162%, while the Barings Korea fund also enjoyed a remarkable year, finishing 74% higher.

The Gold SubZone's progress was striking, although the journey was far from smooth. It was at the bottom of the table in the November newsletter after a four-week loss of 3.6%. By December it had climbed back to the top, rising 14.8% in the previous four weeks. The following month it was still in first place, with a four-week return of 7.0%.

Last month it dropped to third place, with a 4.3% gain, but this month it's back in the lead, having gained a further 9.2%.

However, there are a couple of funds from the Natural Resources SubZone that have done even better. Last month, the leading funds were WS Guinness Global Energy and BGF World Energy, and they are still there this month.

BGF World Energy

Last month the WS Guinness Global Energy fund was at the top of the Specialist table, followed by the BGF World Energy fund. This month they have swapped places.

The BlackRock Global Funds (BGF) World Energy fund was launched in 2002 and is domiciled in Luxembourg. It currently has assets of around $1.6 billion.

The fund invests in companies involved in the exploration, development, production and distribution of energy. Its largest holdings include major multinational oil companies such as Chevron, Exxon Mobil, Shell, TotalEnergies and ConocoPhillips.

What is special about the 'Specialist' sector?

The specialist sector is a bit of an odd ball!

This is where all the funds which don't naturally fit into another sector end up and so, not surprisingly, is something of a mixed bag.

We consider it 'high risk', because most of the funds have the same level of volatility that you would associate with the 'Full Steam Ahead' Groups, but this is not always the case.

We don't calculate a sector average because it wouldn't be a fair comparison with the other Groups. There are nearly always funds doing well in this sector, but they might not be the ones that were doing well last month.

To help with our analysis we have created a number of SubZones where we analyse the relative performance of various funds investing in similar things. These are Financial, Infrastructure Healthcare, India, Latin America, Russia & Eastern Europe, and Gold.

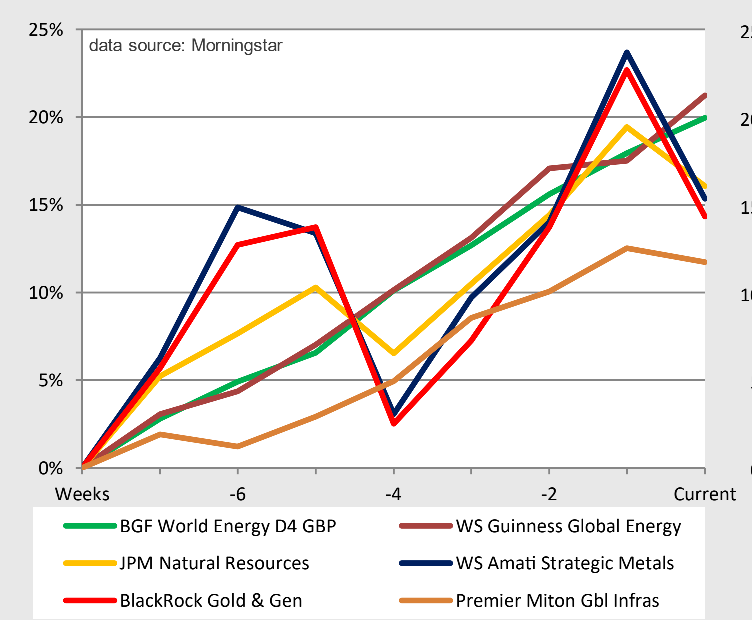
In total we analyse around 65 funds in this sector, most of which do not fall within one of the SubZones.

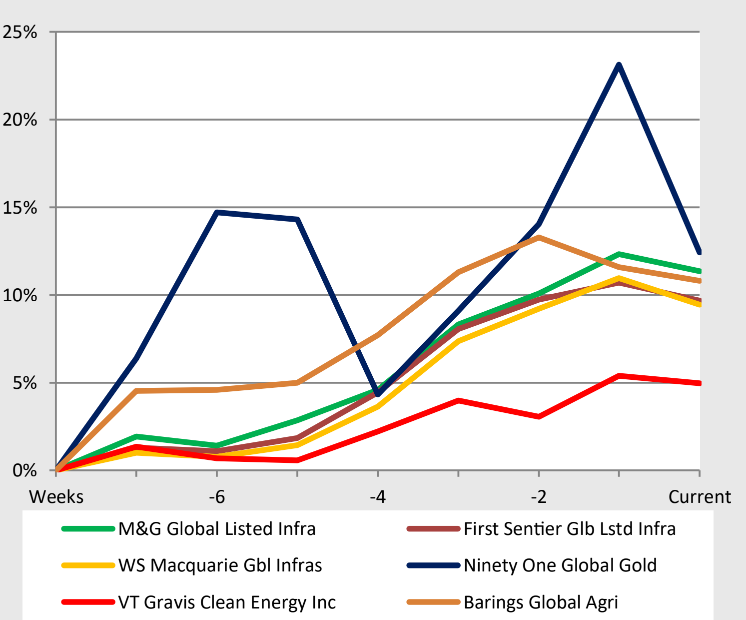
Specialist Sector - 4 Week Data

The Specialist Sector contains funds that do not fit into the constraints of the mainstream sectors, so they are something of a mixed bag. We have created our own SubZones for the funds that have a broadly similar focus - Healthcare, Financial, Gold, India, Latin America, Natural Resources, Infrastructure, Russia & Eastern Europe. All the funds are measured by their 4 Week Decile Ranking and then their Recent Weekly Deciles.

Fund	SubZone (If Applicable)	4 Week		12 Week		26 Week		Recent Weekly Deciles							
		Decile	Return	Decile	Return	Decile	Return	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8
BGF World Energy D4 GBP	Nat Res	1	**10.2%**	1	23.4%	2	29.2%	1	2	2	4	2	2	2	3
WS Guinness Global Energy	Nat Res	1	**11.5%**	1	24.1%	2	31.1%	1	7	1	3	2	2	3	2
JPM Natural Resources.	Nat Res	1	**9.6%**	1	22.2%	1	43.0%	5	1	2	2	10	2	2	1
WS Amati Strategic Metals	Nat Res	1	**11.8%**	1	25.5%	1	83.4%	9	1	1	1	10	9	1	1
BlackRock Gold & General	Gold	1	**11.4%**	2	21.4%	1	67.3%	10	1	1	1	10	3	1	1
Premier Miton Global Infras Inc	Infrastructure	2	**6.9%**	3	11.9%	4	15.2%	2	2	7	2	4	2	8	4
M&G Global Listed Infrastructure	Infrastructure	2	**6.9%**	3	12.4%	4	15.1%	2	3	6	2	5	3	7	4
First Sentier Glb Lstd Infra	Infrastructure	2	**5.3%**	4	9.3%	5	14.6%	2	5	7	2	3	4	5	5
WS Macquarie Global Infras,	Infrastructure	2	**5.9%**	3	10.8%	4	16.0%	3	3	5	2	4	4	6	6
Ninety One Global Gold	Gold	2	**7.1%**	2	15.7%	1	67.9%	10	1	1	1	10	7	1	1
VT Gravis Clean Energy Income	Infrastructure	3	**2.8%**	4	7.0%	8	3.7%	1	2	10	5	5	7	8	5
Barings Global Agriculture.	Nat Res	3	**3.1%**	2	12.8%	5	11.2%	1	10	5	3	3	5	4	2
BlackRock Ntrl Resources	Nat Res	3	**5.1%**	2	17.8%	2	29.9%	4	3	3	3	9	2	3	1
FTF ClearBridge Global Infras	Infrastructure	3	**4.9%**	3	11.4%	3	19.6%	5	2	6	3	3	3	4	7
Stewart Inv APAC Ldrs Sstby		3	**2.0%**	4	5.4%	5	11.3%	7	2	5	4	7	7	8	5
CG Absolute Return		4	**1.1%**	6	2.3%	8	3.8%	2	6	9	7	7	7	7	7
Jupiter Monthly Alternative Income		4	**0.1%**	6	2.3%	9	2.7%	2	6	9	8	6	7	7	8
BlackRock Dynamic Diversified		4	**0.3%**	6	3.1%	6	6.8%	3	5	8	7	8	6	4	6
Sanlam Glb Artfcll Intlgc		4	**1.0%**	8	-3.0%	8	2.9%	4	5	4	6	9	9	9	9
Polar Capital Smart Energy		4	**0.8%**	2	12.7%	2	35.7%	9	4	2	3	1	6	3	3
Invesco Global Financial Capital	Financial	5	**-0.1%**	7	1.5%	8	4.5%	1	8	10	9	7	6	5	8
AXA Fram Health:	Healthcare	5	**-0.3%**	10	-6.3%	7	6.3%	3	9	3	9	10	10	4	10
AXA Fram Biotech:		5	**0.0%**	9	-3.1%	4	16.5%	3	10	3	6	8	10	2	10
Sarasin Food & Agri Opps	Nat Res	5	**-0.3%**	7	1.7%	9	-0.8%	5	7	4	7	5	9	7	6
HSBC Monthly Inc		5	**-0.2%**	5	5.3%	5	12.1%	6	4	2	8	6	4	6	6
Polar Capital Global Insurance	Financial	6	**-1.3%**	7	1.2%	7	5.4%	3	3	7	10	1	6	4	10
Pictet Biotech		6	**-0.8%**	9	-3.3%	2	28.6%	4	7	9	8	5	10	3	10
Royal London UK Income + Grth		6	**-0.8%**	5	3.7%	6	9.3%	6	6	6	7	6	5	6	5
CT Monthly Extra Inc		6	**-1.8%**	6	3.6%	6	7.6%	6	8	7	6	4	6	6	7

The charts below shows the 8 week performance of the leading funds in the Specialist sector table above.





Global Bond Analysis

A few years ago, the Investment Association introduced a whole range of new sectors to provide more specific information about Global Bonds. Every few months we have a closer look at how they are doing.

Each month, on page 8, we review most Investment Association sectors. This includes UK Gilts, Index-Linked Gilts, £ Corporate Bonds, £ High Yield Bonds, and £ Strategic Bonds. The remaining bond sectors are grouped under our Global and Global Emerging Bond sector.

Here, we drill down into the performance of the other individual bond sectors.

Most went up in 2024, with the best, USD High Yield, rising by 9.3%. Last year, all bar one posted positive annual returns. Leading the way was G.E.M Bond - Blended, up 12.9%, followed by Euro High Yield Bond, up 10.4%.

So far this year, all sectors are showing gains, with G.E.M Bond - Local Currency setting the pace - up 3.8% in two months.

Investment Association Sector	Returns (%)				1st Jan to 28th Feb
	2024	2025	Jan	Feb	
Euro Corporate Bond	0.2	8.6	0.0	1.7	1.7
Euro Government Bond	-3.3	6.0	0.0	2.6	2.6
Euro High Yield Bond	2.7	10.4	-0.1	1.5	1.4
Euro Mixed Bond	-1.5	7.4	0.1	2.2	2.4
USD Corporate Bond	4.5	0.1	-1.8	3.2	1.3
USD Government Bond	3.0	-1.1	-2.0	3.7	1.7
USD High Yield Bond	9.3	1.5	-1.3	2.0	0.6
USD Mixed Bond	5.4	0.1	-1.6	3.0	1.4
Global Corporate Bonds	4.0	5.7	-0.2	1.6	1.4
Global Government Bond	-1.8	2.7	-0.5	2.5	2.0
Global High Yield Bond	7.2	6.5	0.0	1.1	1.0
Global Inflation Linked Bond	0.0	4.8	0.3	1.8	2.1
Global Mixed Linked Bond	2.9	5.0	-0.2	1.8	1.6
G.E.M Bond - Blended	3.8	12.9	0.7	2.5	3.2
G.E.M Bond - Hard Currency	6.9	7.5	-0.4	2.4	2.0
G.E.M Bond - Local Currency	-2.8	12.2	0.7	3.1	3.8

Data source: Morningstar

If you are managing your own investments, but need fixed tariff financial planning, then Saltydog have negotiated special rates for subscribers with IFA firm JPM Asset Management Ltd. For more information give them a call on 01184 181818, or visit their website www.jpmasset.co.uk

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT

GOING UP

Brent crude spikes above $100 a barrel

Nvidia beats Q4 earnings forecasts

Gold back over $5,000 an ounce

UK GDP up 1.3% in 2025, slightly better than 2024

Bitcoin bounces from $64,000 low

GOING DOWN

US Supreme Court rules against Trump tariffs

US eases sanctions on Russian oil

Silver falls 30% from recent high

Labour loses Gorton and Denton by-election

NASA delays Artemis II moon rocket launch