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# Royal London Sterling Extra Yield Bond Fund

Quarterly Investment Report

31 March 2026



# Quarterly Report

## The fund as at 31 March 2026

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Royal London Sterling Extra Yield Bond Fund. The report has been produced by Royal London Asset Management. The report starts with a summary dashboard showing key information about the fund. A glossary is located at the end of the report covering the description of some of the more technical terms used within the report. All data is as at the report date unless otherwise stated.

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# The fund

## Fund performance objective and benchmark

The Fund aims to generate a high level of income. The Benchmark is being used by the Fund for performance comparison purposes only. The Fund will be actively managed and its portfolio will not be constrained by reference to any index. The Fund seeks to achieve a gross redemption yield of 1.25 times the gross redemption yield of the FTSE Actuaries British Government 15 years index (the "Benchmark"). The Benchmark is being used by the Fund for performance comparison purposes of the gross redemption yield of the securities held by the Fund only.

## Fund value

	Total £m
31 March 2026	1,870.12

## Asset allocation

	Fund (%)
Conventional credit bonds	95.74
Index linked credit bonds	1.27
Conventional gilts	0.67
Other	2.32

## Fund analytics

	Fund
Fund launch date	11 April 2003
Fund base currency	GBP
Benchmark	FTSE Actuaries British Government 15 years Index
Duration (years)	4.39
Redemption yield (%)	7.45
Number of holdings	271
Number of issuers	208

# Performance to 31 March 2026

## Performance

	3 Month (%)	6 Month (%)	1 Year (%)	3 Years (p.a.)	5 Years (p.a.)	Since Inception (p.a.)
A Inc GBP	0.49	2.53	8.33	10.62	6.83	7.90
Z Inc GBP	0.49	2.54	8.33	10.62	6.83	7.16

Past performance is not a guarantee or reliable indicator of future returns. The impact of fees or other charges, including tax, where applicable, can be material on the performance of your investment. The impact of fees reduces your investment. Please refer to the Glossary for the basis of calculation and impact of fees. Source: Royal London Asset Management; Gross performance.

Performance based on RL Sterling Extra Yield Bond Fund (A Inc), since inception date of the share class is 11 April 2003 and RL Sterling Extra Yield Bond Fund (Z Inc), since inception date of the share class is 13 December 2013.

## Performance commentary

In a quarter where broad sterling credit indices saw negative returns, the fund was able to produce a small positive return, with the fund's high yield and unrated bonds seeing strong positive returns while this was largely offset by the investment grade portion of the fund. Investment grade corporate credit suffered as investors became more sensitive to inflation risk and the direction of policy rates.

Distributions in respect of the first quarter of 2026, payable at the end of May, are 1.86p, 1.83p, 1.74p, and 1.72p respectively for the A, B, Y and Z class income shares. These compare to amounts of 1.81p, 1.78p, 1.69p and 1.67p distributed respectively for the fourth quarter of 2025.

Stock selection effects remain the driver of the fund. Our consumer services, general industrials and structured bonds were the relative outperformers, seeing strong positive performance.

Within general industrials, geopolitical volatility leading to a sharp uptick in the price of oil saw bonds with exposure to the sector see strong positive performance. Investments in DOF Group, Jacktel, Floatel, Golden Energy, Tullow Oil and Bluenord were all positive contributors in the quarter.

The key to the fund's continued strong performance lies in its diversified approach, both to sector and geography. As a result of this, a contributor to stock selection positive effects were found in our structured bond exposure. Many of these bonds had rallied less than other sectors in 2025, but more importantly, with the increase in uncertainty generally, the greater confidence around cashflows and payment of coupons and principal from these bonds becomes more attractive. Key holdings such as Telereal (backed by BT telephone exchanges) and Intu (shopping centre) saw positive returns in a quarter where most bonds saw negative returns.

Typically, a reliable positive contributor, the fund's bank holdings were negative for the quarter. In particular, AT1 bonds suffered volatility with Nationwide and Santander seeing negative returns. Similarly, our subordinated insurance debt holdings also saw negative returns, with Prudential and Just among the poor performers.

# Performance and activity

## Top 10 holdings

	Weighting (%)
ELECTRICITE DE FRANCE SA 7.375 31 Dec 2079	2.56
INTULN_13-11 8.75 16 Jan 2029	2.14
ABBEY NATIONAL PLC 10.0625 31 Dec 2079	2.02
NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY WARRANT 10.25 31 Dec 2079	1.93
SANTANDER UK % NON CUM PRAF PLC	1.89
CENTRICA PLC 6.5 21 May 2055	1.74
M&G PLC 6.34 19 Dec 2063	1.64
CO-OPERATIVE GROUP HOLDINGS (2011) 7.5 08 Jul 2026	1.59
STANDARD LIFE PLC 5.75 31 Dec 2079	1.58
CANARY WHARF GROUP INVESTMENT HOLD 3.375 23 Apr 2028	1.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.63</b>

## Fund activity

Over the quarter, the fund utilised the liquidity in short-dated gilts to increase exposure to banks & financials and general industrials – which had been reduced in the previous quarter – taking advantage of attractive opportunities to invest in corporate bonds.

New issue activity is typically high in the first quarter of the year, with this one no exception, despite the pace of overall issuance falling sharply in March. We continued to find attractive opportunities across the market – both in established, larger sectors such as financials, areas that we have historically favoured such as structured bonds, and newer areas that add diversification in terms of sector and underlying currency.

Banks & financials remain the largest part of the portfolio with a long-standing high level of exposure to the sector based on the belief that credit spreads looked very attractive for the risk taken. At the margin, we have been reducing exposure, however, as holdings mature, but we also continue to be active in this area. Examples of buys over the quarter included senior bonds from Investec and BPCE, as well as subordinated bonds from Credit Agricole. We also added AT1 bonds - these lower down in the capital structure but offering a higher yield - including ING and UK specialist bank Paragon.

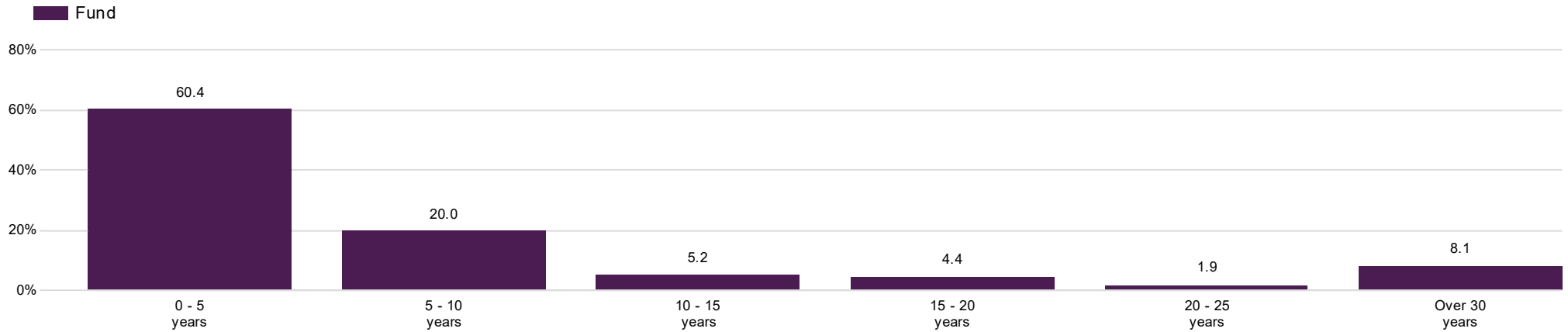
Technology and the growth in AI has been the trend of note in the past few years. One significant change in the past few months has been US hyperscalers looking beyond the US dollar market to raise capital. We added a new issue of 100-year bonds from Google parent company Alphabet at an attractive spread. This adds diversification to the portfolio.

Structured bonds remain a key element in our portfolios. We believe that the market continues to overlook these attractive issues that give investors greater certainty over cashflows and a higher yield. During the quarter we added an AAA rated new issue from Sirius – backed by a portfolio of UK logistics assets at a material spread premium to the market with a floating rate structure that helps manage overall interest rate risk. We also added a new issue from Telereal – backed by BT telephone exchange rental income – whose bonds offered an attractive above-market spread.

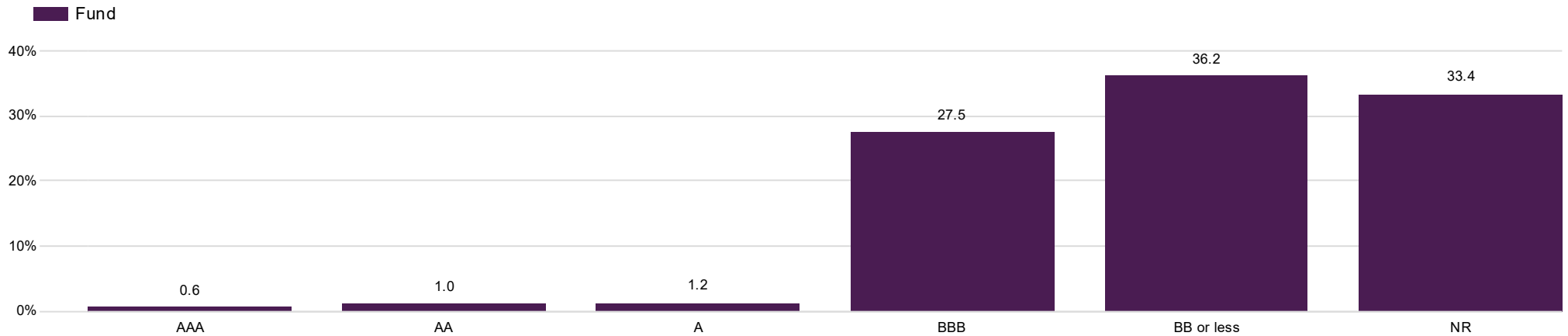
Other new issues also included names in the real estate sector, notably CPI Property, a commercial property firm focused on the Central & Eastern European (CEE) region. Elsewhere, the fund added senior debt from Norwegian firm Eqva, which looks to acquire companies in the oil & gas sector that are aiding in the transitioning to net zero, as well as US telecoms giant Verizon – all at attractive yield premia to the market.

# Fund breakdown

## Maturity profile

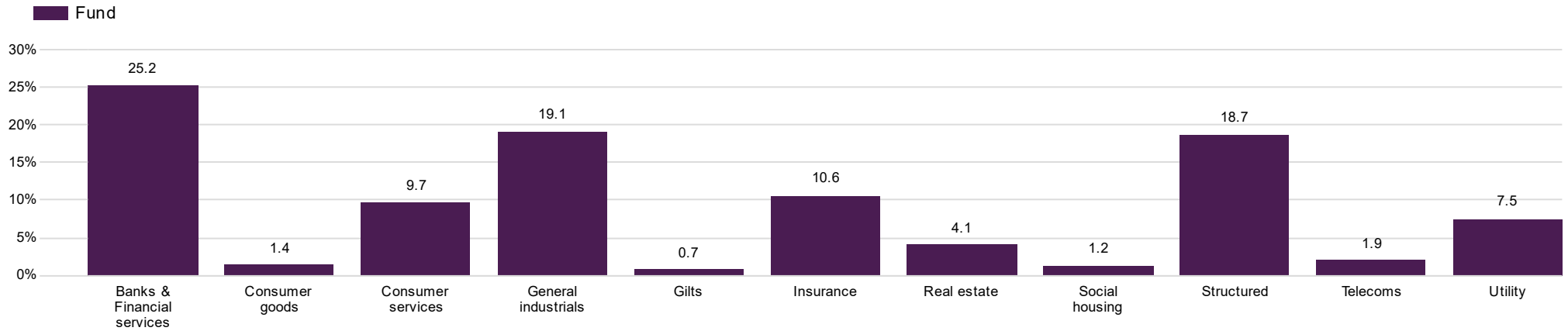


## Credit Ratings

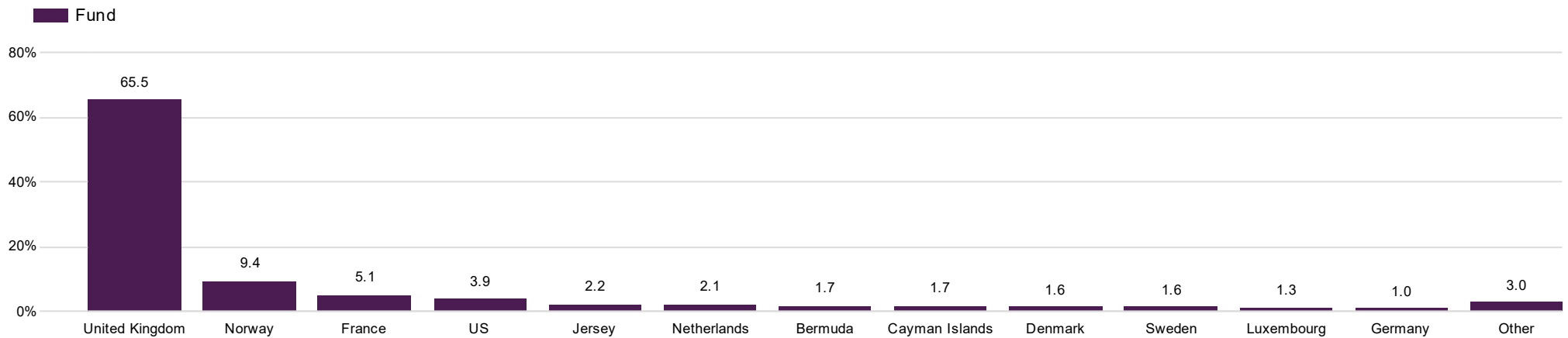


# Fund breakdown

## Sector breakdown



## Geographical breakdown



# Fund Engagement

## Engagement definition

Engagement is active dialogue with investee companies (or other entities). There are two types: engagement for information, which is dialogue as part of investment research or ongoing monitoring, without specific objectives for change, and engagement for change, which is purposeful dialogue to influence positive change, with defined objectives and demonstrable outcomes.

## Engagements

Engagement activity	Fund 3 months	Fund 12 months
Number of entities engaged	8	25
Number of engagements	11	53

This is an estimate. Some engagements at the issuer level may not have been attributed to the specific bond held in the fund, resulting in a lower number of engagement activities.

## Total engagements by theme and topic



Climate	5
Climate - Transition Risk	5
Social & Financial Inclusion	6
Just transition	4
Labour & Human Rights	2

## Engagement focus

Firm-wide engagement activity is centred around six themes which we have identified in consultation with our clients. These are: climate change; nature and biodiversity; health; governance and corporate culture; social and financial inclusion; innovation, technology and society. Portfolio level engagements are not thematic and are focussed on issues specific to managing the portfolio and meeting the investment objective.

Engagement data represents all engagements undertaken at both firm and portfolio level across Royal London Asset Management, and may not be limited to those undertaken solely for the purpose of managing the fund.

The numbers of engagements and themes/topics discussed may differ where a single engagement covers multiple themes/topics.

# Fund Engagement

## Engagement outcomes

### Barclays PLC – Just Transition

#### Purpose:

We engaged with Barclays PLC, a UK-listed bank, to gain clarity on how social dimensions, such as workforce impact and community vitality are being reflected in its climate transition planning.

#### Outcome:

Barclays now recognises the importance of just transition and has begun embedding social factors into its internal frameworks and sector strategies. While specific tools are still emerging, the bank has shared early examples of social considerations being incorporated into new product frameworks and just transition is a component of its Transition Finance Framework, e.g., targeted support to ensure that impacted communities benefit from the low-carbon energy transition. Barclays acknowledged that more consistent, measurable application of these principles is required across its business.

### HSBC Holdings PLC – Just Transition

#### Purpose:

We engaged HSBC Holdings PLC, a UK-listed bank, to understand how it integrates social considerations into its climate transition strategy, including impacts on workers, communities, and regional economies.

#### Outcome:

HSBC now formally acknowledges the importance of a just transition and has taken initial steps to embed it into its strategy, such as updating internal governance and including social factors in its sector and regional engagement frameworks. While no single 'best-in-class' mechanism has emerged, the bank's development of inclusive product design and regional support for small and medium sized businesses demonstrates clear progress. Further work is needed to ensure these commitments are consistently applied across its financing activities.

### John Lewis PLC – Human Rights

#### Purpose:

We engaged John Lewis Partnership PLC, a UK retailer, to discuss how it identifies and manages human rights risks in its food and agricultural supply chains, how these risks inform business decision-making, and how the effectiveness of due-diligence processes is monitored over time. The discussion focused in particular on remediation practices, grievance mechanisms, audit effectiveness, land rights, including Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), and supply-chain health and safety.

#### Outcome:

John Lewis shared updates on its approach to human rights due diligence, including how it refreshes its assessment of key risks and uses a combination of internal reporting, supplier information and external sources to guide its engagement. The company emphasised a remediation-first approach, working with suppliers to address issues rather than defaulting to contract termination. The company outlined its processes for tracking worker concerns, reviewing audit findings, and engaging suppliers to implement corrective actions over time. The company highlighted ongoing programmes aimed at improving worker livelihoods and addressing salient risks in sectors such as agriculture and fisheries. John Lewis acknowledged that investor-facing reporting on health and safety metrics and grievance outcomes, and the effectiveness of its programmes could be clearer. The company indicated it would consider how reporting could be strengthened and we agreed to continue engagement to monitor progress and encourage greater transparency over time.

# Fund Engagement

## Engagement outcomes

### Lloyds Banking Group PLC – Just Transition

#### Purpose:

Lloyds Banking Group PLC, a UK-listed bank, was engaged to explore how it is considering social risks, such as community resilience and customer inclusivity, as it transitions to a low-carbon economy.

#### Outcome:

Lloyds has begun integrating just transition principles into its climate strategy, highlighted through early implementation of region- and sector-focused lending criteria that reflect social and customer considerations. Through its lending to Community Development Financial Institutions, Lloyds demonstrates core just transition principles, fairness, inclusion and place-based support, within its community lending activity. Through our engagement, Lloyds has demonstrated meaningful improvements in product design and regional support initiatives. It acknowledges the need to further align these efforts across all financing activities.

### NatWest Group PLC – Just Transition

#### Purpose:

NatWest Group PLC, a UK-listed bank, was engaged to explore how it considers the broader social impact, on workers and regions, when providing finance to clients through its transition strategy.

#### Outcome:

NatWest formally recognises the need for a just transition approach in its climate planning and has taken initial steps to reflect social aspects in lending and client engagement strategies. In particular, its Human Rights Report, an early version of which RLAM provided feedback on, demonstrates how financial institutions can align climate strategy with human rights principles. The bank illustrated improvements such as regional analysis and product design aligned with just transition goals. We will monitor how these considerations are scaled.

# Market commentary

## Market overview

The first quarter of 2026 was dominated by a sudden regime shift as geopolitics moved to the centre of the macro picture. Escalating tensions in the Gulf region came to a head in late February with the US-Israel offensive against Iran.

The escalation added an additional layer of uncertainty and triggered concerns over oil and gas supplies, energy prices and near-term inflation risks. Brent crude hit more than 105 US dollars per barrel at the end of March as supply through the Strait of Hormuz was restricted and gas prices also surged, leading to a quickly deteriorating risk sentiment.

In the US, the spike in oil prices was a headwind, but the economy's energy sensitivity proved lower than in past shocks and the US benefits from being a major producer, helping US equities show relative resilience even as the quarter ended weakly. Investors also had to digest policy uncertainty after legal constraints changed the scope for tariffs announced in April 2025 and new tariff proposals reintroduced volatility, complicating the outlook for inflation and limiting the Federal Reserve's room to cut rates.

Markets weighed the risk of a prolonged energy shock elevating recession likelihood later in 2026, even if the base case remained for a modest growth hit and higher near term inflation.

As a net importer and more exposed to gas prices, the eurozone faced a tougher growth-inflation trade-off, even as incoming data still pointed to modest expansion and easing headline inflation. The ECB kept its policy unchanged with the deposit rate at 2%, but the broader oil and gas price shock pushed markets to reassess the path of European rates.

In the UK, the macro backdrop was similarly shaped by the energy price shock, but equities proved comparatively more defensive than some global peers, echoing patterns seen in prior commodity-driven events. In sterling credit, spreads that had tightened through 2025 began to widen in early 2026, with concerns over US private credit having a greater influence than Iran developments, while rising gilts yields resulted in higher corporate yields.

Primary markets were active over the first quarter, particularly during February. Credit performance was supported by areas such as structured bonds and financials, even as investors became more sensitive to inflation risk and the direction of policy rates.

Government bond markets bore the brunt of the repricing. Front end yields jumped, and curves reset higher as markets moved from anticipating rate cuts to higher rates later in the year, with higher energy costs seen as an inflationary impulse that central banks could not ignore.

Moves in short dated yields were especially pronounced as markets tried to map the oil shock into policy reaction functions, while longer dated yields also swung as markets attempted to price the risks of any or all of higher inflation, lower growth and even potentially larger government borrowing.

UK 10-year gilt yields shot up to 4.92%, up from 4.48% at the end of December and surpassing their highest levels seen last year (4.89% in January 2025). In the US, 10-year treasury yields rose to 4.31% in March from 4.14% at the end of December. The German 10-year bund yield was 2.98% at the end of the first quarter, rising from 2.82% three months prior.

The sterling investment grade credit market (iBoxx non-gilt index) returned -1.62% over the period under review. Spreads ended the quarter at 0.85% (iBoxx), compared to 0.77% (iBoxx) at the end of 2025. Sector returns were negative across the board, with more defensive areas such as covered bonds and supranationals less affected than areas with longer duration such as consumer services, telecoms and utilities.

## Outlook

The ongoing global macro environment remained unsettled in the first quarter. Geopolitical risks, fiscal uncertainty and divergence in global monetary policy drove volatility in both nominal and real yields. More specifically the recent escalation in tensions around Iran, add an additional layer of uncertainty to the inflation and growth outlook.

While the immediate market focus tends to be on energy prices and near-term inflation risks, history suggests that prolonged geopolitical shocks are ultimately negative for global growth as higher input costs, tighter financial conditions and weaker confidence begin to bite. In this scenario, inflation may prove stickier than central banks would like, even as growth momentum fades.

Sterling credit markets modestly outperformed gilts during the first quarter, helped by shorter duration and the higher income. Spreads remain relatively tight compared to the past two decades, but as we pointed out at the start of the year, when looking at a company level, defaults are low, company balance sheets are generally healthy, and investors continue to look for yield.

At a fundamental level, we still believe that credit spreads over-compensate investors for downgrade risk, and that the all-in yield on sterling credit remains attractive. Furthermore, we continue to find attractive investment opportunities, partly through the new issue market but also by focusing on exploiting market inefficiencies.

# Market commentary

By focusing on bottom-up analysis, we continue to build overall portfolios that we believe offer attractive risk / return profiles with above-market yields.

Near-term absolute performance is likely to be heavily influenced by movements in the yields of underlying government bond markets. We believe that continued emphasis on diversification and our bias towards secured and collateralised debt to help mitigate downgrade risk, as well as our focus on income, will continue to support returns as has been the case through the present environment of volatile yields.

Despite the uncertain outlook at present, a characteristic of the fund is the scope to invest across a wide range of assets, encompassing investment grade, high yield and unrated bonds, diversified by sector and across both sterling and non-sterling bonds.

This, together with a process orientated towards mitigating risk by investment in bonds where structure or a claim on assets or on cash flows, and with a focus on income generation, has been the basis of the fund's strong performance over the longer term. While the state and challenges of economic and market conditions change over time, we believe the fund is well positioned to continue to deliver attractive returns to investors over the medium term.

## Further Information

Please click on the links below for further information:



### Find out more

In an uncertain geopolitical and economic environment, we recognise the importance of keeping our clients updated on our current investment thinking.

Articles, videos, podcasts and webinars giving the latest views of our investment experts can be found in the Our Views section of [www.rlam.com](http://www.rlam.com), including regular updates from our Fixed Income, Global Equity, Sustainable and Multi Asset teams.

# Disclaimers

## Important information

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### Notice for UK Investors

The Fund is recognised in the UK under the Overseas Fund Regime (OFR) but is not a UK authorised fund and is not authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). It is therefore not subject to the same regulatory oversight as UK authorised Funds and is not required to adhere to the UK sustainable investment labelling disclosure requirements. Most of the protections provided by the UK regulatory system, and the compensation under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, will not be available. Investors are strongly encouraged to seek independent financial advice before making any investment decisions.

The Fund is a sub-fund of Royal London Asset Management Funds plc, an open-ended investment company with variable capital (ICVC), with segregated liability between sub-funds.

Incorporated with limited liability under the laws of Ireland and authorised by the Central Bank of Ireland as a UCITS Fund. It is a recognised scheme under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

The Management Company is FundRock Management Company SA, Registered office: Airport Center Building, 5 Heienhaff, L-1736 Senningerberg, Luxembourg and is authorised and regulated by the Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier (CSSF).

The Investment Manager is Royal London Asset Management Limited.

The Prospectus and Key Investor Information Document (KIID) are available in English via the relevant Fund Information page on [www.rlam.com](http://www.rlam.com). A summary of investor rights is also available in English, and can be accessed at [www.rlam.com/uk/policies-and-regulatory](http://www.rlam.com/uk/policies-and-regulatory)

RLAM may terminate the arrangements made for marketing of the fund pursuant to Article 93a of Directive 2009/65/EC.

For more information on the Fund or the risks of investing, please refer to the Prospectus or Key Investor Information Document (KIID), available via the relevant Fund Information page on [www.rlam.com](http://www.rlam.com).

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# Risks and Warnings

## Investment risk

The value of investments and any income from them may go down as well as up and is not guaranteed. Investors may not get back the amount invested.

## Credit risk

Credit risk is the potential for loss due to a borrower, debtor or debt issuer defaulting on agreed obligations to make interest or capital repayments. Credit ratings are independent assessments of the credit risk of a debtor or an individual debt security. Securities that have a lower credit rating have a higher risk of default.

## EPM techniques risk

The Fund may engage in EPM techniques including holdings of derivative instruments. Whilst intended to reduce risk, the use of these instruments may expose the Fund to increased price volatility.

## Exchange rate risk

Investing in assets denominated in a currency other than the base currency of the Fund means the value of the investment can be affected by changes in exchange rates.

## Interest rate risk

Fixed interest securities are particularly affected by trends in interest rates and inflation. If interest rates go up, the value of capital may fall, and vice versa. Inflation will also decrease the real value of capital.

## Liquidity risk

In difficult market conditions the value of certain fund investments may be difficult to value and harder to sell, or sell at a fair price, resulting in unpredictable falls in the value of your holding.

## Counterparty risk

The insolvency of any institutions providing services such as safekeeping of assets or acting as counterparty to derivatives or other instruments, may expose the Fund to financial loss.

## Derivative risk

Derivatives are highly sensitive to changes in the value of the underlying asset which can increase both Fund losses and gains. The impact to the Fund can be greater where they are used in an extensive or complex manner, where the Fund could lose significantly more than the amount invested in derivatives.

# Performance to 31 March 2026

## Cumulative (%)

	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	3 Years (p.a.)	5 Years (p.a.)
<b>A Inc GBP (gross)</b>	0.49	2.53	8.33	35.40	39.17	10.62	6.83
<b>A Inc GBP (net)</b>	0.28	2.10	7.43	32.03	33.45	9.70	5.94
<b>Z Inc GBP (gross)</b>	0.49	2.54	8.33	35.41	39.15	10.62	6.83
<b>Z Inc GBP (net)</b>	0.34	2.24	7.71	33.07	35.18	9.98	6.21

## Annualised (%)

## Year on year performance (%)

	31/03/2025 - 31/03/2026	31/03/2024 - 31/03/2025	31/03/2023 - 31/03/2024	31/03/2022 - 31/03/2023	31/03/2021 - 31/03/2022
<b>A Inc GBP (gross)</b>	8.33	10.80	12.81	(1.53)	4.38
<b>A Inc GBP (net)</b>	7.43	9.87	11.86	(2.36)	3.51
<b>Z Inc GBP (gross)</b>	8.33	10.79	12.81	(1.54)	4.38
<b>Z Inc GBP (net)</b>	7.71	10.15	12.16	(2.11)	3.77

Past performance is not a guarantee or reliable indicator of future returns. The impact of fees or other charges, including tax, where applicable, can be material on the performance of your investment. The impact of fees reduces your investment.

Source: RLAM as at 31 March 2026. All figures are mid-price to mid-price in GBP.

# Glossary

## Asset allocation

Breakdown of the assets by asset classes. Based on RLAM asset classification scheme.

## Bonds

Securities that represent an obligation to repay a debt, with interest. Investment grade bonds are high quality bonds that are viewed as being highly likely to make all scheduled payments of interest and principal. Low quality bonds carry higher risk but also typically pay higher rates of interest. Corporate bonds are those issued by companies to raise finance.

## Credit ratings

Credit ratings are based on RLAM composite ratings which uses a hierarchy of S&P, Moody's and then the Fitch rating.

## Derivatives

A financial instrument whose price is dependent upon or derived from one or more underlying asset.

## Duration

Measure of sensitivity of a Fixed Income instrument to changes in interest rates, indicating the potential impact of interest rate fluctuations on the value of the investment.

## Efficient Portfolio Management (EPM) techniques

The Fund may engage in EPM techniques including holdings of derivative instruments. The use of these instruments may expose the Fund to volatile investment returns and increase the volatility of the net asset value of the Fund. EPM techniques may involve the Fund entering into transactions with counterparties where there may be a risk of counterparty default. The Fund's ability to use EPM strategies may be limited by market conditions, regulatory limits and tax considerations.

## Fund analytics

All figures exclude cash. Credit bonds include non-sterling bonds and CDs where held within the fund or benchmark.

This is applicable to the following sections: fund Asset Allocation, Duration, Yield curve, Sector breakdown, Financial holdings, Credit ratings.

## Number of holdings

Total number of unique holdings of the Fund excluding cash, currency and derivatives.

## Number of issuers

Number of unique issuers of all assets held by the Fund, excluding cash, currency and derivatives.

## Performance

Both the Fund and Index performance are based on close of business prices.

## Pricing

The Fund's price may swing to bid or offer to protect existing investors from the costs associated with buying or selling the fund's underlying assets when other investors are entering or leaving the fund. Performance is based on this pricing.

## Redemption yield

The weighted average rate of discount at which the future obligations of interest and capital payments of each of the fund's holdings, in each case calculated to the point in time at which each may redeem that results in the worst (lowest) rate, equates to its current price, gross of relevant fund management costs and gross of tax.

## Sector breakdown

Breakdown of the fixed income assets, excluding derivatives and cash by RLAM's internal industry sector classification scheme. Figures are subject to rounding.