

# M&G Credit Income Investment Trust



Quarterly review as at 31 March 2021

# **Company description**

The Company aims to generate a regular and attractive level of income with low asset value volatility by investing in a diversified portfolio of public and private debt and debt-like instruments ('Debt Instruments'), of which at least 70% will be investment grade. Over the longer term, it is expected that the Company will be mainly invested in private Debt Instruments, which are those instruments not traded on a stock exchange. The Company currently proposes quarterly dividends at an annual rate of LIBOR + 3% on NAV per calendar year with a variable, fourth interim dividend to be determined after each year end, which will take into account the net income over the whole financial year and, if appropriate, any capital gains. The Company targets LIBOR plus 4% over the longer term.

The Company has the ability to borrow up to 30% of net asset value although it is expected that it will primarily be managed without borrowing and typically any borrowings will not exceed 20% of net asset value. Any borrowings may magnify any gains or losses made by the Company.

# Risks associated with the company

The value of investments will fluctuate, which will cause share prices to fall as well as rise and you may not get back the original amount you invested. There is no guarantee that the Company's Investment Objective will be achieved.

The Company may be exposed to the possibility that a debtor will not meet its repayment obligations.

Changes in interest rates may adversely affect the market value of some of the Company's investments.

Debt Instruments may be repaid by issuers at short notice: as a result it may be difficult for the Company to reinvest capital at an attractive price or at all, which may affect it adversely.

A variety of factors, such as market conditions, liquidity concerns or Company performance may lead to a reduction in trading volume or shares trading at a discount to their net asset value. Shareholders may also be unable to realise their investment at quoted market prices or at all.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. Please refer to the Risk section in the Prospectus.



# **Key information**

Portfolio manager	Adam English
Portfolio manager tenure from	14 November 2018
Deputy portfolio managers	Robert Whitten and Yiu-Wai Cheung
Launch date	14 November 2018
ISIN number	GB00BFYYL325
TIDM code	MGCI
Market capitalisation	£131.2m
Number of holdings	146
Dividend dates	Quarterly: Feb, May, Aug and Nov
Yield to maturity	3.40%
Modified duration	1.19
Spread duration	3.86
Weighted Average Life	4.82
Gearing	0.00%

Please see the glossary for an explanation of terms used.

# **Charges**

Annual management charge	0.50%*
Ongoing Charges Figure (OCF)	0.87%**
*will change to 0.70% from 1/4/21.	

\*\*will change to 1.07% from 1/4/21.

# Portfolio overview (%)

	Fund
Cash on deposit	3.16
Public	48.76
Asset backed securities	21.69
Bonds	27.07
Private	47.56
Asset backed securities	7.06
Bonds	4.09
Funds	11.96
Loans	14.03
Private Placement	0.98
Other	9.44
Derivatives	0.52
Debt derivatives	0.28
Forwards	0.24

Due to rounding, percentage figures displayed in the Factsheet may not add up to exactly 100%.

# **Market review**

The start of the new year saw the UK enter a full national lockdown, with an announcement in February that restrictions would be partially lifted in mid-April and a full unrestricted reopening scheduled for early June. In the US, January saw a "blue wave" sweep materialise following victory for the Democratic party in the Georgia Senate run-off elections. Newly inaugurated President Joe Biden wasted little time in announcing his proposal for a \$1.9tn economic rescue plan, prompting a sharp sell-off in US treasuries, a move which was mirrored in other core rates markets. Upward pressure on government bond yields gained momentum in February, with investors quickly becoming fixated on the risk of inflation and economic overheating, which led to increased volatility in rates markets. The yield on the 10 year US Treasury almost doubled over the quarter, whilst that of the 10 year UK gilt widened to approximately four times the level seen at the end of 2020 - at one point spiking to a near two-year high. In the Eurozone, the yield on the German 10 year bund touched its highest level since the onset of the pandemic. For context, it is the second worst start to a year for US Treasuries since 1980 and February saw UK government bonds suffer the sharpest monthly sell-off since 2016.

UK and US vaccination programmes have so far proved to be among the most successful in the world and as at the end of the quarter both had administered at least one dose of the vaccine to almost half of their populations. By contrast, the Eurozone vaccine rollout has thus far proved problematic, with the same comparable vaccination measure for core European nations at approximately 15%, with vaccine supply shortages adding to existing tensions between the EU and the UK. Consequently, due to low vaccination rates in the Euro-region, the emergence of a "third wave" of the virus late in the quarter prompted the reintroduction of tighter social restrictions, which look set to hamper the economic rebound in Europe in the short term.

Public credit markets have appeared largely insensitive to the short-term economic damage caused by lockdowns and social restrictions and have already priced in an economic "lift-off" at some point during the second quarter of the year. Corporate credit spreads continued to tighten over the first half of the quarter before seemingly finding a level, with BBB/BB/B index spreads remaining approximately unchanged since mid-February, and markets appearing to require some sort of signalling either from central banks or via repricing of credit curves in order to provide direction. The CCC-rated area of the market which had lagged the wider rally in credit for much of last year, continued to outperform over the period, symptomatic of the wider compression theme that continues to play out between investment grade and high yield credit. Despite the volatility and upward pressure seen in sovereign debt markets, the technical picture in public credit remains firm, supported by an assumed accommodative stance from central banks remaining in place for the foreseeable future.

# **Manager commentary**

Portfolio activity over the period saw us continue to sell down public bond holdings, which following the sustained rally in credit over the past twelve months, had tightened to offer yields inside our long-term return objective. These bonds were purchased at much wider spreads, many during the initial onset of the pandemic and upon selling we were able to realise notable capital gains. We reduced risk by actively selling down our exposure to subordinated banking and insurance paper as we position the portfolio more cautiously against a backdrop of historically tight corporate bond spreads and rising government bond yields.

During the quarter the Trust executed £7.1m across six new private deals. These included secured, investment grade positions in two bilateral real estate loans (c.£3.8m); a high yield senior secured term loan to a multi-award-winning IT infrastructure solutions business with a large UK corporate client base; and the purchase of c.£1.8m investment grade rated, junior mezzanine notes in a securitisation providing debt financing for a portfolio of unsecured personal loans originated by a leading Australasian marketplace lender. We also participated (£0.87m) in the tap from an existing borrower in the portfolio, creating a new junior secured note to rank behind our existing senior holding, and added £0.62m to an existing loan in the portfolio that has performed well since our initial investment.

Underlying NAV performance has had a strong start to 2021, with the Trust's hedge against rising interest rates allowing us to capture positive credit spread performance in the portfolio without the drag on returns created by rising government bond yields. In the first quarter of the year NAV total return was up by 2.02%, which compares well to the performance on fixed income indices such as the ICE BofA Sterling and Collateralised Index which fell by 4.48% and the ICE BofA European Currency Non-Financial High Yield 2% Constrained Index which rose by 1.51%.

### Sector breakdown (%)

	Trust
ABS (Assorted)	16.87
Funds	11.96
Real Estate Dev and Mgt	11.10
Mortgage Backed	8.94
Non-Agency CMBS	5.72
Investments and Misc Financial	4.59
Services	
Cash on Deposit	3.16
REITs	2.66
Housing Association	2.65
Auto Loans	2.43
Cons/Comm/Lease Financing	2.30
Banking	2.29
Tech Hardware and Equipment	2.19
ABS Automobiles	1.96
Life-Insurance	1.86
ABS Credit Cards	1.80
Telecom - Wireless	1.79
Food and Drug Retail	1.58
Beverage	1.51
Diversified Capital Goods	1.38
Aerospace/Defense	1.37
Support-Services	1.29
ABS Consumer Loans	0.98
Telecom - Wireline Integrated and Services	0.91
Integrated Energy	0.74
Health Services	0.64
Non-Electric Utilities	0.63
Environmental	0.62
Brokerage	0.57
Metals/Mining Excluding Steel	0.43
Electronics	0.43
Food - Wholesale	0.41
Oil Field Equipment and Services	0.36
Debt Derivatives	0.28
Auto Parts and Equipment	0.26
Printing and Publishing	0.25
Forwards	0.24
Software/Services	0.22
Multi-Line Insurance	0.15
Chemicals	0.14
Department Stores	0.12
Personal and Household Products	0.11
Packaging	0.11

Source: All data contained within the Factsheet is sourced from the Company administrator, State Street as at 31 March 2021.

# **Outlook**

Inflation looks set to remain the central theme in markets as the year progresses. Inflationary pressures including rising cost inputs (due in part to global supply chain disruption), pent up demand (particularly for services) and accumulated pandemic savings available for consumer spending, should see inflation peak in the coming months in the US and the UK as both economies transition to a full reopening, with Europe set to lag behind. The consistent messaging from key central bank figures has been that high inflation will be transitory, so how these pressures are born out in the economic data released over the summer months and latter part of the year and whether it is supportive of that narrative will be key, along with the reaction from central banks and the market. What we have seen in the US is the market refusing to accept the timeline for interest rate hikes set forth by the Fed, believing that inflation will run too hot and force them to act sooner than they'd either expected or wanted to. Whilst the inflationary pressures in the UK and Eurozone remain more subdued, the balancing act between ensuring that the economic recovery is allowed to take full effect before monetary policy is tightened whilst not allowing inflation to run out of control, is the main challenge faced by all global policy makers. During the quarter, ECB President Christine Lagarde commented that they were "closely monitoring" rising borrowing costs across the bloc before subsequently increasing the net amount of weekly bond purchases as part of its asset purchase programme (PEPP), which acted in suppressing rising sovereign bond yields across the region. Meanwhile, Bank of England governor Andrew Bailey said that they would need to see "a lot more evidence" of inflation being sustainably above 2% before any action would be taken. Both governor Bailey and Fed Chair Jay Powell have commented that quantitative easing (QE) will be tapered before interest rates are raised, and with inflation expected to ramp up during the remainder of the year, discussions on the timeline for the unwinding of QE by central banks can be expected to become more frequent as the year progresses.

Despite the generally assumed consensus for a smooth economic recovery, there are potential risks that we remain cognisant of. The eventual tapering of QE could threaten the relative stability of current spread levels with the market having become used to the support offered by government bond buying programmes. Also, despite the successful vaccine rollouts in the UK and the US, slow progress in Europe and many areas of the emerging world and spiralling global cases relating to a "third wave" highlight the ongoing risk the virus poses to a sustained economic recovery, with vaccine resistant strains also remaining a very real global threat.

With investment grade credit trading inside historical market tights and high yield credit spreads already well inside their historical average and continuing to tighten, we generally find little relative value to be had from investing in most areas of the public market. We will, however, continue to add public bonds selectively where attractive stock specific situations present themselves, although under current market conditions our focus remains on the rotation out of public and into private assets, adding yield and reducing risk as we do so. The private asset pipeline looks strong and we have indicated our interest across a number of deals that we expect to close in the coming months.

# Dividend Schedule

	Pay date	Amount GBp
First	23 August 2019	2.09
Second	28 February 2020	1.65
Third	28 May 2020	0.85
Fourth	28 August 2020	0.77
Fifth	27 November 2020	0.71
Sixth	26 February 2021	1.95
Seventh	28 May 2021	0.74

# Credit rating breakdown (%)

	Trust
Unrated	0.52
Derivatives	0.52
Cash and Investment grade	77.01
Cash On Deposit	3.16
AAA	5.57
AA+	2.50
AA	3.94
AA-	3.36
A+	0.21
A	1.94
A-	2.91
BBB+	9.04
BBB	11.61
BBB-	23.45
M&G European Loan Fund	9.33
Non-investment grade	22.47
BB+	4.62
BB	4.38
BB-	3.21
B+	1.29
В	3.63
B-	1.43
CCC+	0.62
CCC-	0.41
D	0.24
M&G European Loan Fund	2.63

<sup>\*</sup>See glossary

# Share Price vs NAV

As at	NAV p/s (cum income)	
31 March 2021	101.49	90.75

# **Total Return**



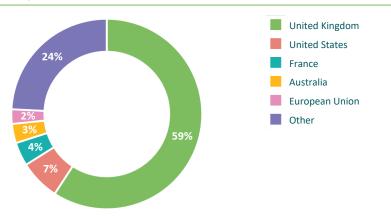
NAV total return (%,p.a.)**	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year	2 years	Since Inception***
M&G Credit Income Investment Trust	0.31%	2.02%	5.65%	13.05%	4.80%	4.78%
Benchmark *	0.34%	0.99%	2.00%	4.14%	3.91%	3.83%

Calendar year NAV total return (%,p.a.)**	2020	2019
M&G Credit Income Investment Trust	3.75%	6.04%
Benchmark *	4.32%	3.34%

Source: Morningstar Inc, State Street and M&G, as at 31 March 2021. Returns stated in GBP terms.

The portfolio is actively managed. The Portfolio Manager has complete freedom in choosing which investments to buy, hold and sell in the fund.

# Geographical Exposure %



Source: M&G and State Street as at 31 March 2021.

<sup>\*3</sup> Month Libor +2.50% from inception to 31 December 2019, thereafter 3 Month Libor +4.00%.

<sup>\*\*</sup>The total return calculation assumes that dividends paid to shareholders are reinvested at NAV at the time the shares are quoted ex-dividend.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Trust inception 14 November 2018.

# Top 20 holdings (%)

	Trust
M&G European Loan Fund (Prvt)	11.96
Cash on Deposit	3.16
Sonovate Limited Var. Rate 12 Apr 2021 (Prvt)	1.77
ATLAS 2020 1 Trust AUD Note A2 (Prvt)	1.68
Delamare Finance 1.3066% 19 Feb 2029	1.57
Finance For Residential Social FRSH 1 1 A2 RegS	1.54
Hall & Woodhouse Var. Rate 30 Dec 2023 (Prvt)	1.51
Westbourne 2016 1 WR Senior Var. Rate 30 Sep 2023 (Prvt)	1.41
Signet GBP Stretch Term Loan (Prvt)	1.40
NDPFT 2017-1 A RegS	1.37
Regenter Myatt Field North GBP Term Loan (Prvt)	1.33
Project Driver TL (Prvt)	1.30
Project Hammond (Prvt)	1.30
RIN II LTD (A) A 144A	1.25
Finance For Residential Social FRSH 1 1 A1 RegS	1.11
MRSTNI 1 A4	1.07
Ripon 17-1X B RegS	1.02
Luminis Ltd 09/25 1 (Prvt)	1.00
Hammerson Plc 6% Snr Unsecured 23/02/2026	0.99
LPG 4.49% 21 May 2024 (Prvt)	0.98

(Prvt) – Private Investment

# **Glossary**

This glossary provides an explanation of terms used in this factsheet and in our literature.

#### Asse

Anything having commercial or exchange value that is owned by a business, institution or individual.

#### Asset Backed Security (ABS)

A security whose income payments and value are derived from and collateralized by a specified pool of underlying assets.

### Asset class

Category of assets, such as cash, company shares, fixed income securities and their subcategories, as well as tangible assets such as real estate.

### Basis points (bps

A common unit of measure for interest rates and other percentages in finance. One basis point is equal to 1/100th of 1%, or 0.01%, or 0.0001, and is used to denote the percentage change in a financial instrument.

#### **Bond**

A loan in the form of a security, usually issued by a government or company, which normally pays a fixed rate of interest over a given time period, at the end of which the initial amount borrowed is repaid.

### Capital

Refers to the financial assets, or resources, that a company has to fund its business operations.

### Capitalisation

The total market value of all of a company's outstanding shares.

#### Comparative sector

A group of funds with similar investment objectives and/or types of investment, as classified by bodies such as the Investment Association (IA) or Morningstar™. Sector definitions are mostly based on the main assets a fund should invest in, and may also have a geographic focus. Sectors can be the basis for comparing the different characteristics of similar funds, such as their performance or charging structure.

# Consumer Prices Index (CPI)

An index used to measure inflation, which is the rate of change in prices for a basket of goods and services. The contents of the basket are meant to be representative of products and services we typically spend our money on.

### Corporate bonds

Fixed income securities issued by a company. They are also known as bonds and can offer higher interest payments than bonds issued by governments as they are often considered more risky.

### Credit

The borrowing capacity of an individual, company or government. More narrowly, the term is often used as a synonym for fixed income securities issued by companies.

# Credit Default Swaps (CDS)

Are a type of derivative, namely financial instruments whose value, and price, are dependent on one or more underlying assets. CDS are insurance-like contracts that allow investors to transfer the risk of a fixed income security defaulting to another investor.

# Credit rating

An independent assessment of a borrower's ability to repay its debts. A high rating indicates that the credit rating agency considers the issuer to be at low risk of default; likewise, a low rating indicates high risk of default. Standard & Poor's, Fitch and Moody's are the three most prominent credit rating agencies. Default means that a company or government is unable to meet interest payments or repay the initial investment amount at the end of security's life.

# **Credit spread**

The difference between the yield of a corporate bond, a fixed income security issued by a company, and a government bond of the same life span. Yield refers to the income received from an investment and is expressed as a percentage of the investment's current market value, and a bond is a fixed income security.

# Default

When a borrower does not maintain interest payments or repay the amount borrowed when due.

# Derivative

Financial instruments whose value, and price, are dependent on one or more underlying assets. Derivatives can be used to gain exposure to, or to help protect against, expected changes in the value of the underlying investments. Derivatives may be traded on a regulated exchange or traded over the counter.

# Developed economy / market

Well-established economies with a high degree of industrialisation, standard of living and security.

# Dividend

Dividends represent a share in the profits of the company and are paid out to a company's shareholders at set times of the year.

# Emerging economy or market

Economies in the process of rapid growth and increasing industrialisation. Investments in emerging markets are generally considered to be riskier than those in developed markets.

# Episode

A phase during which investors allow their emotions to affect their decision making, which can cause financial markets to move irrationally.

# Equities

Shares of ownership in a company.

### Ex-dividend, ex-distribution or XD date

The date on which declared distributions officially belong to underlying investors.

#### Exposure

The proportion of a fund invested in a particular share/fixed income security, sector/region, usually expressed as a percentage of the overall portfolio.

### Fixed income security

A loan in the form of a security, usually issued by a government or company, which normally pays a fixed rate of interest over a given time period, at the end of which the initial amount borrowed is repaid.

### Floating rate notes (FRNs)

Securities whose interest (income) payments are periodically adjusted depending on the change in a reference interest rate.

### Gearing

Is a measure of financial leverage that demonstrates the degree to which the Investment Trust's operations are funded by equity capital versus creditor financing.

### Gilts

Fixed income securities issued by the UK government.

#### Government bonds

Fixed income securities issued by governments, that normally pay a fixed rate of interest over a given time period, at the end of which the initial investment is repaid.

### Hard currency (bonds)

Refers to bonds denominated in a highly traded, relatively stable international currency, rather than in the bond issuer's local currency. Bonds issued in a more stable hard currency, such as the US dollar, can be more attractive to investors where there are concerns that the local currency could lose value over time, eroding the value of bonds and their income.

### Hedgin

A method of reducing unnecessary or unintended risk.

### High yield bonds

Fixed income securities issued by companies with a low credit rating from a recognised credit rating agency. They are considered to be at higher risk of default than better quality, ie higher-rated fixed income securities but have the potential for higher rewards. Default means that a company or government is unable to meet interest payments or repay the initial investment amount at the end of security's life.

### Index

An index represents a particular market or a portion of it, serving as a performance indicator for that market.

# Index-linked bonds

Fixed income securities where both the value of the loan and the interest payments are adjusted in line with inflation over the life of the security. Also referred to as inflation-linked bonds.

# Inflation

The rate of increase in the cost of living. Inflation is usually quoted as an annual percentage, comparing the average price this month with the same month a year earlier.

# Investment Association (IA)

The UK trade body that represents fund managers. It works with investment managers, liaising with government on matters of taxation and regulation, and also aims to help investors understand the industry and the investment options available to them.

# Investment grade bonds

Fixed income securities issued by a company with a medium or high credit rating from a recognised credit rating agency. They are considered to be at lower risk from default than those issued by companies with lower credit ratings. Default means that a company or government is unable to meet interest payments or repay the initial investment amount at the end of a security's life.

# Investment trust

An investment trust is a form of collective investment found mostly in the United Kingdom. Investment trusts are closed-end funds and are constituted as public limited companies.

# Issuer

An entity that sells securities, such as fixed income securities and company shares.

# Leverage

When referring to a company, leverage is the level of a company's debt in relation to its assets. A company with significantly more debt than capital is considered to be leveraged. It can also refer to a fund that borrows money or uses derivatives to magnify an investment position.

# LIBOR

The three-month GBP London Interbank Borrowing Rate is the rate at which banks borrow money from each other (in UK pounds) for a three-month period.

# Liquidit

A company is considered highly liquid if it has plenty of cash at its disposal. A company's shares are considered highly liquid if they can be easily bought or sold since large amounts are regularly traded.

### Local currency (bonds)

Refers to bonds denominated in the currency of the issuer's country, rather than in a highly traded international currency, such as the US dollar. The value of local currency bonds tends to fluctuate more than bonds issued in a hard currency, as these currencies tend to be less stable.

### Long position

Refers to ownership of a security held in the expectation that the security will rise in value.

### M&G European Loan Fund ("ELF")

An open-ended fund managed by M&G that invests in leveraged loans issued by, generally, substantial private companies located in the UK and Continental Europe. ELF is not rated and the Investment Manager has determined an implied rating for this investment, utilising rating methodologies typically attributable to collateralised loan obligations. On this basis, 78% of the Company's investment in ELF has been ascribed as being investment grade, and 22% has been ascribed as being sub-investment grade. These percentages have been utilised on a consistent basis for the purposes of determination of the Company's adherence to its obligation to hold no more than 30% of its assets in below investment grade securities.

#### Macroeconomic

Refers to the performance and behaviour of an economy at the regional or national level. Macroeconomic factors such as economic output, unemployment, inflation and investment are key indicators of economic performance. Sometimes abbreviated to 'macro'.

#### Maturity

The length of time until the initial investment amount of a fixed income security is due to be repaid to the holder of the security.

### **Modified duration**

A measure of the sensitivity of a fixed income security, also called a bond, or bond fund to changes in interest rates. The higher a bond or bond fund's modified duration, the more sensitive it is to interest rate movements.

### Monetary policy

A central bank's regulation of money in circulation and interest rates.

### Morningstar™

A provider of independent investment research, including performance statistics and independent fund ratings.

#### **NAV Total Return**

A measure showing how the net asset value (NAV) per share has performed over a period of time, taking into account both capital returns and dividends paid to shareholders. NAV total return is expressed as a percentage change from the start of the period. It assumes that dividends paid to shareholders are reinvested at NAV at the time the shares are quoted ex-dividend.

NAV total return shows performance which is not affected by movements in share price discounts and premiums. It also takes into account the fact that different investment companies pay out different levels of dividends.

### Near cash

Deposits or investments with similar characteristics to cash.

### Net

The proportion of a fund invested in, for example, different sectors. Derivatives are included. The latter are financial instruments whose value, and price, are dependent on one or more underlying assets.

# Net Asset Value (NAV)

A fund's net asset value is calculated by taking the current value of the fund's assets and subtracting its liabilities.

# Non-Executive Director (NED)

A non-executive director is a member of a company's board of directors who is not part of the executive team. A non-executive director typically does not engage in the day-to-day management of the organization, but is involved in policymaking and planning exercises.

# Ongoing Charges Figure (OCF)

Ongoing charges figure (as a percentage of shareholders' funds) is an annualised rate calculated using average net assets over the period in accordance with the AIC's recommended methodology.

# Options

Financial contracts that offer the right, but not the obligation, to buy or sell an asset at a given price on or before a given date in the future.

# Overweight

If a fund is 'overweight' a stock, it holds a larger proportion of that stock than the comparable index or sector.

# Payment date

The date on which distributions will be paid by the fund to investors, usually the last business day of the month.

# **Contacts**



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www.mandg.co.uk/CreditIncomeInvestmentTrust

### Physical

The fund's exposure excluding derivatives, which are financial instruments whose value, and price, is dependent on one or more underlying securities.

### Private

Refers to assets that are not listed or traded on a recognized exchange.

### Public

Refers to assets that are listed on and can be traded on a recognized exchange.

### **REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust)**

A REIT is a company that owns, operates or finances income-producing real estate.

### Retail Prices Index (RPI)

A UK inflation index that measures the rate of change of prices for a basket of goods and services in the UK, including mortgage payments and council tax.

#### Securitise/Securitisation

The creation and issuance of tradable securities, such as bonds, that are backed by the income generated by an illiquid asset or group of assets. By pooling a collection of illiquid assets, such as mortgages, securities backed by the mortgages' income payments can be packaged and sold to a wider range of investors.

### Share price total return

Total return to shareholders, assuming all dividends received were reinvested at the midmarket price without transaction costs into the shares of the Company at the time the shares were quoted ex-dividend.

### **Short position**

A way for a fund manager to express his or her view that the market might fall in value.

### **Short-dated corporate bonds**

Fixed income securities issued by companies and repaid over relatively short periods.

### Short-dated government bonds

Fixed income securities issued by governments and repaid over relatively short periods.

#### Spread duration

A measure of the portfolio's sensitivity to changes in credit spreads. The higher a bond or bond fund's spread duration, the more sensitive it is to changes in credit spreads.

### Sub-investment grade bonds

Fixed income securities issued by a company with a low rating from a recognised credit rating agency. They are considered to be at higher risk from default than those issued by companies with higher credit ratings. Default means that a company or government is unable to meet interest payments or repay the initial investment amount at the end of a security's life.

### Swap

A swap is a derivative contract where two parties agree to exchange separate streams of cashflows. A common type of swap is an interest rate swap to hedge against interest rate risk.

# Synthetic inflation-linked bonds

Refers to securities created using a combination of assets to simulate the characteristics of inflation-linked bonds. By buying inflation-linked government bonds and selling protection against companies defaulting on their debts, using credit default swaps, the combined synthetic investment will behave similarly to a physical inflation-linked bond, had one had been issued. Synthetic inflation-linked bonds are usually created where a company does not have any inflation-linked bonds in issue.

# Total return

The term for the gain or loss derived from an investment over a particular period. Total return includes income (in the form of interest or dividend payments) and capital gains.

# Valuation

The worth of an asset or company based on its current price.

# Volatility

The degree to which a given security, fund, or index rapidly changes. It is calculated as the degree of deviation from the norm for that type of investment over a given time period. The higher the volatility, the riskier the security tends to be.

# Weighted Average Life (WAL)

The asset-weighted average number of years to final maturity of the portfolio, based on the final maturity for all assets/exposures.

# Yield

This refers to either the interest received from a fixed income security or to the dividends received from a share. It is usually expressed as a percentage based on the investment's costs, its current market value or its face value. Dividends represent a share in the profits of a company and are paid out to the company's shareholders at set times of the year.

# Yield to maturit

The total return anticipated on the portfolio if the underlying bonds are held until maturity.

