

As at 31 December 2023

Overview

The Retirement Countdown Fund (RCF) is designed and managed to preserve capital. The Fund is mostly invested in liquid money market instruments, which are expected to deliver a similar return to the return objective, before fees. It is one of two funds forming part of a member's lifecycle. The allocation to the RCF increases as a member approaches retirement.

Over the quarter, the Fund delivered a return in line with the objective.

The allocation to Responsible Investment (RI) focussed instruments continued to meet the relevant RI objective, at 100%. Over time the RI allocation will fluctuate but is targeted to account for at least 50% of the portfolio.

Lifecycle: The lifecycle is in three phases - savings phase, glidepath phase and retirement phase. During the glidepath phase, the majority of member pension savings are gradually moved from the Diversified Growth Fund (DGF) to the RCF, over a 10-year period. The allocation then remains constant in the retirement phase.

Full details of lifecycle and Fund Objectives are set out in the Statement of Investment Principles, [here](#).

Description

The RCF typically invests in liquid money market funds, cash deposits and short-dated bonds.

The integration of responsible investment considerations seeks to manage investment risk with the aim of enhancing long-term portfolio returns which is in the best interests of the members and beneficiaries of the Fund.

Key facts

Fund Size: £489.5 million

Fund Launch Date: 24 July 2014

Base Currency: GBP

Return Objective: SONIA

Annual Management Charge: 0.30%

Unit Price: 130.3963p

Valuation and Dealing Frequency: Weekly

Pricing Basis: Single price

Changes over the quarter

We continued to favour money market funds over the quarter, with an allocation at 100%.

The Bank of England did not increase the interest over the quarter. The official bank rate remained at 5.25% level that was set in August.

The inflation remains at high levels, but it continued to fall across the quarter. This was a driving factor in the Bank of England's decision not to increase the bank rates.

Objectives

Return objective

To deliver a return equal to the Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA) rate consistent with the preservation of capital.

Risk objective

To minimise the risk of capital loss.

Responsible Investment objective

The Trustee has set goals as part of its RI objectives:

- Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050, consistent with the Paris Climate Agreement.
- At least half of the portfolio's net asset value in investments which support the Trustee's RI beliefs.

Fund returns

	Returns					Single-year member returns				
	3 months	12 months	3 years	5 years	Since Inception *	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Fund (cumulative)	1.3%	4.5%	5.5%	6.3%	7.6%	4.5%	1.1%	-0.2%	0.3%	0.6%
Return objective (cumulative)	1.3%	4.7%	6.2%	7.2%	9.1%	4.7%	1.4%	0.1%	0.2%	0.7%
Fund (annualised)		4.5%	1.8%	1.2%	0.8%					
Return objective (annualised)		4.7%	2.0%	1.4%	0.9%					

Source: Cardano Risk Management Limited and BNY Mellon. **Fund returns figures shown relate to past performance and are presented net of investment charges. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of current or future performance.**

* Please note that Since Inception date used is 31 July 2014, instead of fund launch date.