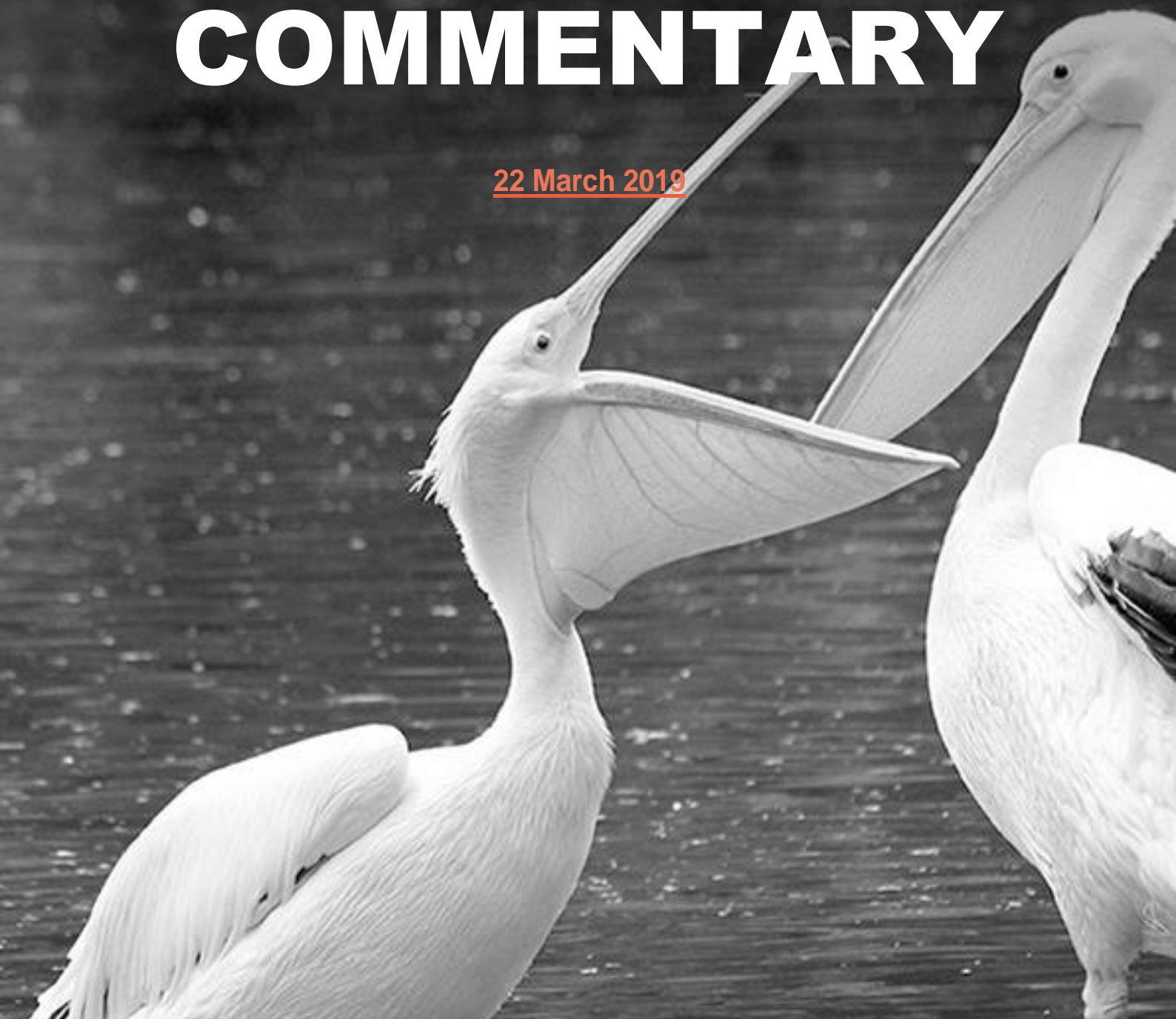




# MARKET COMMENTARY

22 March 2019



### **MARKETS CONTINUE TO GROW**

Stockmarkets across the globe have continued to rise since the beginning of the year. In the US, the Federal Reserve – their equivalent of the Bank of England – continued to say they would remain patient on potentially raising interest rates further which boosted the economy. This also boosted several other countries whose markets are closely linked to the dollar.

### **WHERE DOES TRUMP TURN HIS ATTENTION AFTER CHINA?**

Trade talks between the US and China continue to progress, however Trump's 'America First' trade agenda continues to worry financial markets. It's expected his attentions will turn to foreign-made cars once the China deal is finalised which Europe, Germany in particular, would bear the brunt of.

### **THE B WORD**

In the UK, all roads again lead to Brexit. The Government were defeated on a number of votes, including one where the Prime Minister voted against her own amendment! The one vote which has passed in the last few weeks is an agreement to delay Article 50 beyond the 29<sup>th</sup> March. This now needs agreement by the EU which we expect them to vote on shortly. Despite this, UK Equity markets continued to grow as investors' further rule out the likelihood of leaving the EU with No Deal.

### **OUR VIEW**

The market is predicting a low level of growth, but we do believe there are some reasons for positivity. We begin the year supportive of stocks, however we do expect to become more cautious as the year progresses. The main risks still come from Brexit uncertainty in the UK, the possibility of trade talks between and US and China being derailed, in addition to the US central bank raising interest rates if markets grow too quickly.

## **INVESTING WITH US**

Our key goal is to deliver good outcomes for our customers. We do this by following our core beliefs:

- **Pensions are long term investments**

While it can be hard to watch large market drops, especially if the value of your savings is falling, it's important to remember that investing for retirement is a long term game. It's very normal for an economy to go through phases of expansion and contraction.

In fact, over the long run there is a recession every five to ten years. We think of these cycles in terms of waves of growth and inflation, and consider which investments do best when growth is strong or weak, and when inflation is falling or rising. Our investment experts analyse and understand where we are in that cycle and which types of investments we should be investing in within the portfolio mix. This is called the short term view and we do this on a day to day basis so that we can try to maximise returns and avoid some of the losses.

Falling markets can be buying opportunities, particularly when you are planning to invest for a long time period. We see the current market falls as potential buying opportunities for equities. The multi asset portfolios are currently holding slightly more equities than average, having bought on the recent dips. We're also holding more corporate and high yield bonds.

- **Greater diversification**

We believe that investing in a wide range of asset classes will result in more consistent performance across a wide range of economic conditions. This spread of different investments helps to reduce the risk of having all your eggs in one basket.

The Governed Portfolios are designed for investors who are saving into a pension and aim to maximise returns above inflation within a defined risk framework and term to retirement.

The Governed Retirement Income Portfolios (GRIPs) are designed for customers who are taking money out of their pension on a regular basis and aim to maximise returns above inflation to support sustainable, regular income withdrawals for a range of risk profiles. The portfolios hold a wide range of investments, including company shares, property, bonds, commodities and cash in order to help them meet their objectives.

- **Governance**

We believe that all investment options should be monitored on a regular basis, and this is a core part of what we do for our customers. All the portfolios are monitored on an ongoing basis by our experts to ensure they deliver in line with their objectives. You can keep an eye on how your investments are performing using our online service.

If you are in any doubt about the suitability of any particular type of investment, you should seek professional financial advice. Advisers may charge for providing such advice and should confirm any costs beforehand.

For more information please  
speak to your Financial Adviser



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March 19