



## June Review

The Fund's F Acc share class units returned -3.02% vs the S&P 500 Index ETF return of -5.67%, in sterling terms.

For the first time for several months, it was the Energy sector that led the decliners in what turned out to be a very challenging month. All sectors were negative in June, led by Energy stocks -17.1%, followed by Materials -13.9%, then Financials -10.9% and Consumer Discretionary -10.8%. The best performing sector was Consumer Staples -2.4% and it's quite rare to see the best performing sector negative for the month. We reduced our weighting to Energy during the month from 19% to 10% and may yet reduce it further. It's notable that the commodity complex has been very weak of late, reflecting a more typical quad 4 environment than we have seen up until now. Copper was -13.5% and Natural Gas was -33.4% in June alone. The softs have also been weak, the wheat price -17.6% this month and has joined Corn and Fertilizer in downtrends. In fact, oil is really the only commodity that is still holding up but we are keeping our Energy positions on a tight leash as the market begins to care more about recession risk than inflation. This can also be evidenced by the 10-year bond yield which has also started to fall from a recent peak of 3.5% and is now down at 2.9%.

The best contributors to the fund in June were our Healthcare stocks and we continue to like this sector which is showing both absolute and relative strength. Utilities and Staples also made a positive contribution, and we continue to have a cautious and defensive portfolio as we navigate these tough markets.

## Market Outlook

The first half of 2022 goes down in the history books as the third worst start to the year since 1950. Does that mean we can look forward to a great second half? Well, sentiment has certainly changed and there aren't too many bulls out there and that is a good development as we'll need to see pervasive bearishness before we put in a bottom. We've also seen markets price a lot in, with many growth and tech stocks having fallen a long way. But as we look forward, Q2 earnings season is going to be tough and until the Fed changes course on interest rates, we believe it's still right to be defensive and keep a healthy cash balance to deploy when the opportunities present themselves.

**Felix Wintle Fund Manager, VT Tyndall North American Fund, 30 June 2022**

**Data sources:** Bloomberg, Strategas Research Partners

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