

Wilson said the recent performance in stores has been less than impressive. Like for like sales, excluding fuel, declined 1.1% in the third quarter.

"At a time of gently rising inflation and improving real wages Sainsbury's ought to be enjoying growth in group sales," Wilson said.

"There have been for some time question marks over the store offering and presentation, which is starting to look like a persistent problem. Following the Argos takeover and proposal to merge with Asda, there is a clear sense management is taking its eye off the basics, albeit grocery sales did rise 0.4%."

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