

# LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund

Positive absolute returns with low volatility

During December the fund was up 1.0% compared to the return on the UK Bank Rate of 0.3%.

A new year, a new beginning. Many investors may find themselves limping into 2023 with a growing sense of crisis fatigue from the last few years. Contrastingly, we find ourselves rather energised as events are broadly sweeping in the direction we have spent years preparing for.

At the moment, a benign market outcome in 2023 depends on an almost impossible trinity: a short and shallow recession, a rapid decline in inflation and an aggressive Fed pivot. Not impossible, but would you bet on it? Why would inflationary pressures, so broad-based as we enter 2023, suddenly dissipate? And even if they do, won't that be because a recession has driven unemployment up? How quickly can a Fed, so concerned about letting the inflation genie out of the bottle, realistically reverse course? If the real economy is deteriorating fast enough that inflation will drop like a stone, then why wouldn't investors also price in significant downside to corporate earnings? We don't have reasonable answers to these questions, but we do have a plan.

In the near term, we are somewhat positioned for a disinflationary lurch on the inflationary journey, bond yields coming down and a bumpy recessionary landing. We are waiting for the opportune moment to pivot towards a portfolio positioned for higher nominal growth alongside inflation and financial repression – but it's not yet. So there is a degree of what appears to be cognitive dissonance in our portfolio construction, because the portfolio we believe you want for the coming six to nine months is almost entirely different from the strategic portfolio you might want to navigate the coming decade. The risk is we are trying too hard; the danger is, by not trying to navigate through choppy markets, investors could get hurt.

We go into the year prepared for an uncomfortable ride. The first half of the year could instead be about an unusually durable US economy, sticky inflation, and a higher peak in interest rates. Alternatively, the market may be saved from further hawkishness but only because the recession happens earlier, and at greater speed. Neither has a happy ending for investors.

The setup points to significant volatility as market participants grapple with narrative swings and shifting financial conditions. We recognise we will need to trade actively to preserve capital in these choppy waters and are ready to change our views as circumstances change. For now, equities remain at their lowest level in our history – 12% gross and around zero net of option protection – though in December we added a 3% position to oil futures via an ETC and have rebuilt gold exposure above 4%.

These periods are processes, not events. Asset markets are down, investors are impatient to buy the dip and return to money-making. These things take time: there were six months between Northern Rock and Bear Stearns and a further six months before Lehman Brothers. Patience and preparation are our watchwords and, in the meantime, for the first time in 14 years, you are starting to be paid a decent return to wait.

Ruffer performance is shown after deduction of all fees and management charges, and on the basis of income being reinvested. Past performance is not a guide to future performance. The value of the shares and the income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount originally invested. The value of overseas investments will be influenced by the rate of exchange.

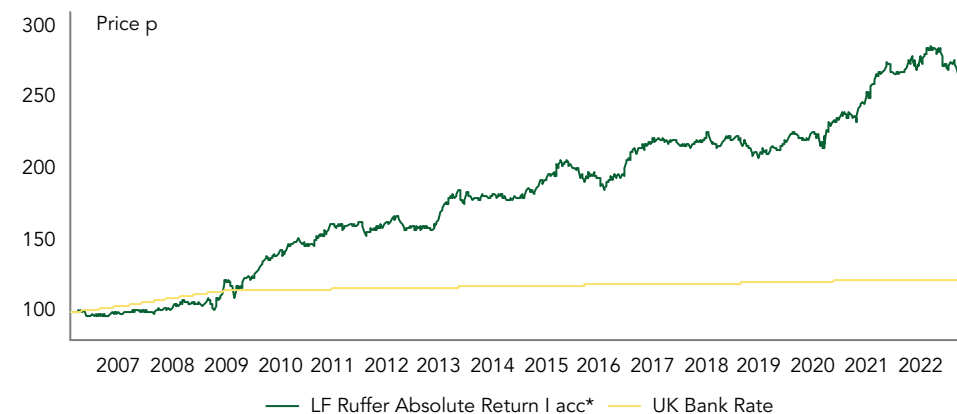


I class December 2022 Issue 202

## Investment objective

To seek to achieve positive returns in all market conditions over any 12 month period, after all costs and charges have been taken. Underlying this objective is a fundamental philosophy of capital preservation. Capital invested is at risk and there is no guarantee that a positive return will be delivered over any twelve-month period.

## Performance since fund launch on 31 January 2006



I accumulation shares	Performance %	Share price as at 30 December 2022	p
December 2022	1.0	I income	214.32
Year to date	6.8	I accumulation	291.04
1 year	6.8		
3 years	29.0		
5 years	31.4		
10 years	77.7		

12 month performance to December %	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
LF Ruffer Absolute Return I acc*	-6.3	8.7	9.7	10.0	6.8
UK Bank Rate	0.6	0.8	0.2	0.1	1.5

Source: Ruffer LLP, Bloomberg. The comparator benchmark shown in this document is as stated in the fund's prospectus. \* This share class has performance data calculated prior to the inception date, 8 Aug 2012. This is based upon a simulated/extended track record, using the track record of LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund C acc.

# LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund as at 30 Dec 2022

## Asset allocation



Asset allocation	%
Short-dated bonds	40.1
Index-linked gilts	18.3
Cash	10.9
Long-dated index-linked gilts	5.6
Gold exposure and gold equities	4.1
Non-UK index-linked	3.5
Protection strategies and options	1.6
UK equities	5.9
Oil exposure	3.1
Europe equities	2.9
North America equities	2.4
Japan equities	1.4
Other equities	0.1
Currency allocation	%
Sterling	60.6
Yen	13.9
US dollar	10.3
Australian dollar	8.3
Euro	3.6
Other	3.3

## Currency allocation



## 10 largest equity holdings\*

Stock	% of fund
BP	1.7
Royal Vopak	0.7
Cigna	0.3
Melrose Industries	0.2
Bank of Ireland	0.2
Coty	0.2
Vallourec	0.2
Unilever	0.2
Ryanair	0.2
Synchrony Financial	0.2

## 5 largest bond holdings

Stock	% of fund
UK Treasury index-linked 2.5% 2024	8.9
US Treasury FRN 31 Oct 2023	7.1
US Treasury FRN 31 Jan 2024	7.0
US Treasury FRN 31 Oct 2024	7.0
UK Treasury index-linked 0.125% 2024	7.0

\*Excludes holdings in pooled funds  
Source: Ruffer LLP.  
Pie chart totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

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The fund data displayed is designed only to provide summary information and the report does not explain the risks involved in investing in the fund. Any decision to invest must be based solely on the information contained in the Prospectus, Key Investor Information Document and the latest report and accounts.

The fund's prospectus and key investor information documents are provided in English and available on request or from [ruffer.co.uk](http://ruffer.co.uk). Please note that LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund is a UK UCITS and is not registered for distribution in any country other than the UK. In line with the Prospectus, it is possible that at any one time the LF Ruffer Absolute Return Fund may invest more than 35% of its assets in transferable securities issued or guaranteed by an EEA state, one or more local authorities, a third country or a public international body to which one or more EEA States belong. The only aforementioned securities where Ruffer would currently consider holding more than 35% would be UK or US government issued transferable securities.

Fund size **£4,242.7m**

## Fund information

	%
Ongoing Charges Figure	1.03
Annual management charge	1.00
Maximum initial charge	7.5
Yield	2.69
Minimum investment	£25m
Ex dividend dates	15 Mar, 15 Sep
Pay dates	15 May, 15 Nov
Dealing	Weekly forward, every Wednesday where this is a business day Plus the last business day of the month
Cut off	10am on Wednesday (where it is a business day) and the last business day of the month
ISIN	Accumulation GB00B81SXL02 Income GB00B83HRZ70
SEDOL	B81SXL0 B83HRZ7
ACD	Link Fund Solutions Limited
Depository	The Bank of New York Mellon (International) Limited
Auditors	Ernst & Young LLP
Structure	Sub-fund of Asperior Investment Funds (OEIC) UK domiciled UCITS Eligible for ISAs

## Dealing line

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## Enquiries

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## Fund Managers

### Steve Russell

#### INVESTMENT DIRECTOR

Graduated from the University of Oxford in PPE and started work as an equity analyst at Confederation Life in 1987, progressing to Head of Equities. In 1999 he moved to HSBC Investment Bank as Head of UK and European Equity Strategy, before joining Ruffer in 2003. He is co-manager of two of Ruffer's flagship funds.



### Jos North

#### INVESTMENT DIRECTOR

Joined Ruffer in 2012 and now leads Ruffer's UK institutional business, including UK defined benefit, defined contribution and local government pension schemes, and UK charities. He is a member of the CISI, following completion of the CISI diploma and co-manages two of Ruffer's flagship funds.



## Ruffer LLP

Ruffer LLP manages investments on a discretionary basis for private clients, trusts, charities and pension funds. As at 30 November 2022, assets managed by the Ruffer Group exceeded £26.1bn.

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