

# LF Ruffer Total Return Fund

Positive absolute returns with low volatility

Higher global yields and fears about slowing economic growth in Europe and China saw the major bond and equity markets decline in August. The fund retreated too, as market declines were not sharp or deep enough to trigger our potent derivative protections.

No single factor drove global yields higher. Instead, a smorgasbord of drivers included: 'higher for longer' interest rate policies amidst persistent inflation; heavy planned US Treasury issuance; robust US economic data; and Fitch's US government credit rating downgrade, which highlighted the scale of the Federal deficit – already a whopping 6.5%, with full employment! The fund's long-dated UK and US inflation-protected bonds suffered from the rise in yields. These should rally in the event of recession.

In Europe, flash PMIs (economic outlook indicators) pointed to a sharp contraction. Meanwhile, China's re-opening is spluttering. Its c \$60tn property market is reeling after years of regulatory pressure, deteriorating demography, shaken household confidence and a broken Ponzi-esque funding model. Piecemeal stimulus measures from Beijing have so far failed to reassure investors, but there's little in the price for good news. We believe fatter market tail risks from China's economy – and politics – will remain with us for years to come. Expect surprises.

China stocks aside, equity markets' August retreat was relatively orderly. An uneventful earnings season plus a lack of policy or inflation shocks has kept volatility ('vol') in markets low. That has kept the vol-targeting machine-led investment strategies – so powerful in today's markets – invested. The fund's small equity allocation retreated with indices but, given the steady nature of the market decline, our derivatives have yet to kick in, so were a small performance drag. The same goes for our c 16% position in the yen, which declined modestly despite the Bank of Japan's relaxation of yield curve control in July. Just like the derivatives, a significant market shock could see dramatic yen appreciation. Our c 8% oil position was the primary positive contributor, helped by continued OPEC supply-side discipline.

Markets still believe in a 'soft landing' – inflation dissipates without a recession. Yet we stick to our increasingly unfashionable belief that record monetary tightening's full impact has yet to be felt. Locked-in low rates and faster nominal GDP growth have likely deferred – but not de-fanged – the biting point. Even America's remarkably robust economy is displaying cracks. Covid-era excess savings have been spent; consumer confidence is slowing; Q2 GDP growth and recent payrolls were revised lower; US department stores are reporting rising credit card delinquencies.

Central banks could soon find themselves in a much trickier situation as inflation 'base effects' and (now rising) energy prices switch from being disinflationary tailwinds to inflationary ones. If economies continue to slow, this could raise recession risk by forcing central banks to stay inappropriately tight. But if economies reaccelerate – especially in the US – it raises the spectre of a second inflationary wave, with further rate hikes. From our derivatives to dollars, yen to bonds, the fund remains well-positioned for the reassertion of gravity in financial markets, and the opportunities that lie beyond.

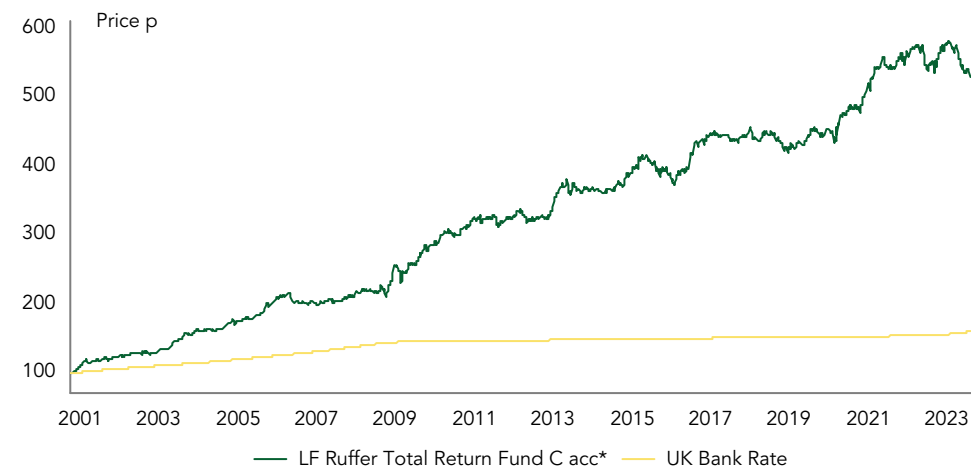
Ruffer performance is shown after deduction of all fees and management charges, and on the basis of income being reinvested. Past performance is not a guide to future performance. The value of the shares and the income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount originally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



## 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 29 September 2000



C accumulation shares	Performance %	Share price as at 31 August 2023	p
August 2023	-1.1	<b>C income</b>	<b>326.74</b>
Year to date	-7.6	<b>C accumulation</b>	<b>530.86</b>
1 year	-3.7		
3 years	10.4		
5 years	19.9		
10 years	45.5		

12 month performance to June %	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
LF Ruffer Total Return Fund C acc*	-1.5	9.0	13.8	0.5	-2.2
UK Bank Rate	0.7	0.6	0.1	0.4	3.2

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, 12 Sept 2012. This is based upon a simulated/extended track record, using the track record of LF Ruffer Total Return Fund O acc.

# LF Ruffer Total Return Fund as at 31 Aug 2023

## Asset allocation



Asset allocation	%
Short-dated bonds	50.0
Long-dated index-linked gilts	8.9
Cash	7.7
Non-UK index-linked	6.2
Gold exposure and gold equities	5.6
Protection strategies and options	-0.9
Commodity exposure	8.8
UK equities	5.3
North America equities	3.5
Europe equities	2.4
Asia ex-Japan equities	2.0
Other equities	0.3

Currency allocation	%
Sterling	61.7
Yen	17.3
US dollar	10.6
Australian dollar	6.2
Other	4.2

## Currency allocation



## 10 largest equity holdings\*

Stock	% of fund
iShares MSCI China A UCITS ETF	1.0
BP	0.5
Alibaba Group Holding	0.5
Bayer AG	0.5
Cigna	0.4
Amazon	0.4
Swire Pacific	0.3
Man Group	0.3
Ambev SA	0.3
Coty	0.3

## 5 largest bond holdings

Stock	% of fund
US Treasury FRN 31 Jan 2025	8.3
US Treasury FRN 31 Jan 2024	8.3
Japanese govt bonds 0.005% 1 Jul 2024	5.3
Japanese govt bonds 0.005% 1 Jun 2024	5.3
Japanese govt bonds 0.005% 1 Apr 2024	5.3

\*Excludes holdings in Ruffer funds

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The information contained in this document does not constitute investment advice and should not be used as the basis of any investment decision. References to specific securities are included for the purposes of illustration only and should not be construed as a recommendation to buy or sell these securities. Ruffer LLP has not considered the suitability of this fund against any specific investor's needs and/or risk tolerance. If you are in any doubt, please speak to your financial adviser.

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 Investment Funds is a UK UCITS. The LF Ruffer Total Return Fund 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 Total 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 £2,853.5m

## Fund information

	%
Ongoing Charges Figure	1.22
Annual management charge	1.20
Maximum initial charge	5.0
Yield	3.00
Minimum investment	£1,000
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

	Accumulation	Income
ISIN	GB00B80L7V87	GB00B58BQH88
SEDOL	B80L7V8	B58BQH8

Investment adviser	Ruffer LLP
ACD	Link Fund Solutions Limited
Depository	The Bank of New York Mellon (International) Limited
Auditors	Ernst & Young LLP
Structure	Sub-fund of LF Ruffer Investment Funds (OEIC) UK domiciled UCITS Eligible for ISAs

Dealing line 0345 601 9610

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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.



### Matt Smith

INVESTMENT DIRECTOR

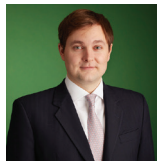
Joined Ruffer in 2011 after graduating from the University of Edinburgh with a first class honours degree in history and German. He spent 2015 seconded to Ruffer's Hong Kong office as an equity analyst, and is a fellow of the CISI. He co-manages two of Ruffer's flagship funds.



### Alexander Chartres

INVESTMENT DIRECTOR

Joined Ruffer in 2010 after graduating from Newcastle University with a first class honours degree in history and politics. He is a member of the CISI 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 31 July 2023, assets managed by the Ruffer Group exceeded £24.7bn.

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