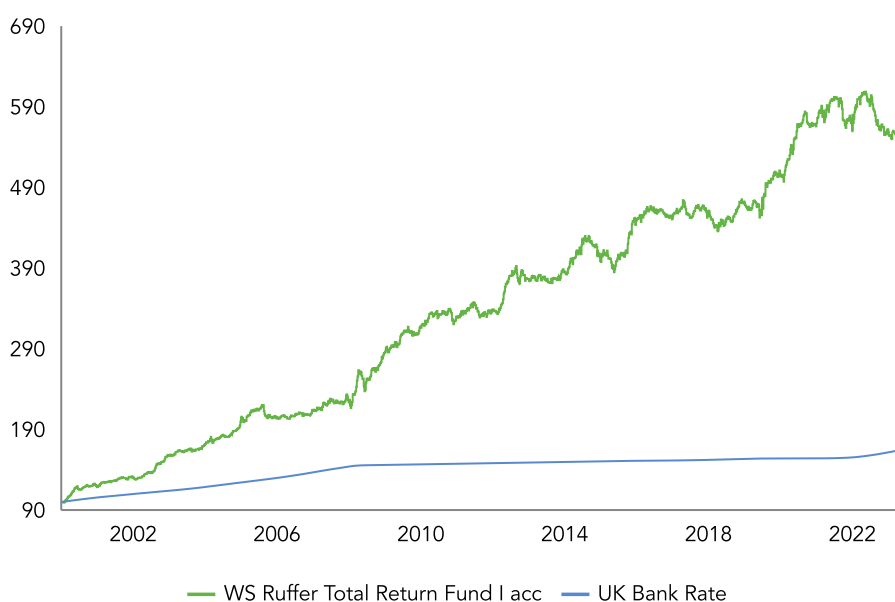


# WS Ruffer Total Return Fund

SHARE PRICE PERFORMANCE SINCE LAUNCH ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2000



Christmas arrived early for asset owners last year, as December saw US equities approach all-time highs and the bond rally continue. The Federal Reserve provided the festive cheer, by pivoting their message from 'higher for longer' interest rates to 'lower, sooner', projecting three cuts in 2024 thanks to falling inflation. This reinforced the market's soft-landing narrative and drove a US-centric Santa rally. Elsewhere, the Bank of Japan left policy unchanged despite significant noise, and investors remained unimpressed by the lack of concrete stimulus measures in China.

As was the case in November, the fund's fixed income holdings were the largest contributor – adding over 1.5% to performance. Yields continued to fall as the Chair of the Federal Reserve assured markets that they were unlikely to raise interest rates any further, taking the US ten year bond yield to 3.9%, down more than 1% since October. Our US exposure participated in the rally as the market broadened out from the 'Magnificent 7' technology stocks. Gold exposure was helpful, as the metal reached new highs. Meanwhile, the yen managed to gain over 4% against both the US dollar and the pound, despite the Bank of Japan leaving their loose monetary policy intact, adding over half a percent to performance in addition to gains from our yen call options. However, despite making positive returns in both December and the final quarter of 2023, the fund continued to face headwinds from its protective positions, which suffered as equities rose and credit spreads narrowed.

It continues to be our belief that tighter liquidity conditions present a significant risk to markets. Accordingly, we have reduced the fund's duration by roughly half from its recent peak, with sales of US bonds and gold bullion. This felt prudent given the bond market is now pricing six interest rate cuts in 2024, double the amount anticipated by the Fed. We believe a soft landing is now close to fully priced, leaving the market exposed to any pushback from policymakers or the data.

We maintain the view that it is too early to declare a soft-landing victory. Even if the probability of this outcome has increased, market pricing has moved even further, creating an asymmetry in asset prices. We think the scenario in which the market's six interest rate cuts are validated, is the arrival of recession. However, a soft landing is not an impossibility, and the fund holds over 20% across equities and commodities which should benefit from a broader market rally and further economic strength. This is also supported by the remaining fixed income positions and gold equities, which should rise in value if yields fall further.

Portfolio balance, which was painfully elusive at points last year, is now much more secure – evident in recent months as markets have rallied and the fund has delivered a positive return, despite its defensive positioning. Crucially though, if liquidity conditions and the economy do deteriorate, our derivative holdings – primarily credit protection and exposure to the VIX, should appreciate sharply. There were glimmers of this mid-month, as a small but sharp one day sell-off in the S&P saw the VIX index spike 12% intraday.

Overall, we enter the new year with the mindset that we are continuing to travel towards the danger, rather than away from it, and we will not let a disappointing 2023 obscure what we see in front of us.

## I CLASS DECEMBER 2023

Performance I acc %	GBP
December	1.6
Year to date	-6.1
1 year	-6.1
3 years pa	2.3
5 years pa	5.4
10 years pa	4.1
Since inception pa	7.7

Share price, p	
H GBP acc	570.30
H GBP inc	348.15
I GBP acc	573.08
I GBP inc	348.86
Dividend yield	2.41

	Net	Gross
Duration (years)	2.9	3.4
Equity exposure %	19.1	19.7

I acc GBP	Volatility %	Sharpe	Sortino
3 years	5.8	0.0	0.0
5 years	6.5	0.6	1.0
10 years	5.9	0.5	0.9
Since inception	6.9	0.8	1.5

### 12 month performance to 31 December 2023

%	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
RTRF I acc	8.6	12.1	9.1	4.5	-6.1
UK Bank Rate	0.7	0.2	0.1	1.5	4.7

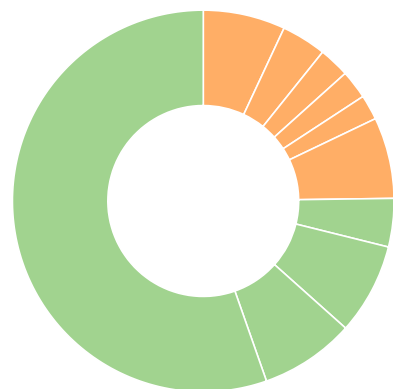
One to twelve month performance figures are cumulative, all others are annualised. Source: Ruffer LLP, Bloomberg. The comparator benchmark shown in this document is as stated in the fund's prospectus. I acc share class performance includes data calculated prior to the inception date, 3 November 2004, based upon a simulated/extended track record using the track record of WS Ruffer Total Return Fund O acc. 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 12 month period.

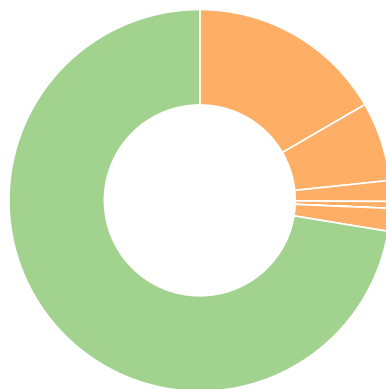
# WS Ruffer Total Return Fund 31 Dec 23

## ASSET ALLOCATION



Asset allocation	%
Short-dated bonds	55.3
Long-dated index-linked gilts	8.0
Cash	7.7
Gold exposure and gold equities	4.1
Credit and derivative strategies	-1.6
Commodity exposure	6.9
Consumer discretionary equities	3.8
Healthcare equities	2.6
Financials equities	2.4
Consumer staples equities	2.1
Other equities	8.5

## CURRENCY ALLOCATION



Currency allocation	%
Sterling	72.4
Yen	16.6
US dollar	6.7
Hong Kong dollar	1.8
AU dollar	0.6
Other	1.9

Geographical equity allocation	%
UK equities	7.7
Asia ex-Japan equities	4.6
North America equities	3.6
Europe equities	3.4
Other equities	0.4

## 5 LARGEST EQUITY HOLDINGS

Stock	% of fund
iShares MSCI China A UCITS ETF	2.0
Alibaba Group	1.2
BP ADR	1.0
Alibaba Group ADR	0.9
Pfizer	0.7

Largest equity holdings exclude Ruffer funds | Source: Ruffer LLP | Totals may not equal 100 due to rounding

## RUFFER LLP

Ruffer LLP manages investments on a discretionary basis for private clients, trusts, charities and pension funds. As at 30 November 2023, assets managed by the Ruffer Group exceeded £23.4bn.



FUND SIZE **£2,614.5M**

## FUND INFORMATION

Annual management charge %	1.0	
Maximum initial charge %	5.0	
Minimum investment (or equivalent in other currency)	£25m	
Ongoing Charges Figure %	1.02	
Cut offs	10am Wednesday (where it is a business day) and the last business day of the month	
Dealing frequency	Weekly forward, every Wednesday where this is a business day, plus the last business day of the month	
Ex dividend dates	15 Mar, 15 Sep	
Pay dates	15 May, 15 Nov	
Investment adviser	Ruffer LLP	
Depositary	The Bank of New York Mellon (International) Limited	
Authorised Corporate Director	Waystone Management (UK) Limited	
Auditors	Ernst & Young LLP	
Structure	Sub-fund of WS Ruffer Investment Funds (OEIC) UK domiciled UCITS Eligible for ISAs	
Share class	ISIN	SEDOL
H GBP acc	GB00BJ5JLX42	BJ5JLX4
H GBP inc	GB00BJ5JLW35	BJ5JLW3
I GBP acc	GB00B03JB001	B03JB00
I GBP inc	GB00B03J9Y05	B03J9Y0

## ENQUIRIES

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## DEALING LINE

0345 601 9610

## FUND TEAM



**Steve Russell**  
FUND MANAGER

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**  
FUND MANAGER

Joined Ruffer in 2011 after graduating from the University of Edinburgh with a first class honours degree in history and German, and is a fellow of the CISI. He co-manages two of Ruffer's flagship funds.



**Alexander Chartres**  
FUND MANAGER

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.

## GLOSSARY

**Volatility** measures the extent to which returns vary over a given period. High volatility means returns have been more variable over time

**Duration** measures the sensitivity of a bond or fixed income portfolio's price to changes in interest rates. The higher the duration, the more sensitive the price or portfolio is to changes in interest rates

**UK Bank Rate** the rate the Bank of England charges banks and financial institutions for loans with a maturity of one day

**Sharpe ratio** measures the performance of an investment, adjusting for the amount of risk taken (compared to risk-free). The higher the ratio, the better the returns compared to the risk taken

**Sortino ratio** measures the extra return an investment makes for each unit of bad risk (the chance of losing money below a certain target)

## DISCLAIMER

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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/rtrf](http://ruffer.co.uk/rtrf) WS Ruffer Investment Funds is a UK UCITS. The WS Ruffer Total Return Fund is not registered for distribution in any country other than the UK. In line with the Prospectus, it is possible at any one time the WS 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.

