



City Of London Corporation

Monthly Investment Analysis Review

March 2022

Monthly Economic Summary

General Economy

The Flash (i.e. provisional) Manufacturing PMI edged down to 55.2 in March, from 58.0 the previous month. However, the Flash Services PMI increased to 61.0 in March of 2022 from 60.5 in February and above forecasts of a decline to 58. The Services PMI rate of expansion was fastest expansion in the services sector in nine months, amid the further reopening of the economy from COVID-19 containment measures. The Flash Composite PMI eased to 59.7 in March from 59.9 in February, above market forecasts of 57.8. The Construction PMI, meanwhile, registered 59.1 in February, up from 56.3 in January to signal the strongest rise in output since mid-2021. UK GDP expanded 1.1% in the three months to January, better than forecasts of 0.8%. Figures came slightly better than market forecasts of a 1% rise. Services was the main contributor (0.8 percentage points), while production and construction both also contributed positively (0.1 and 0.2 percentage points respectively). The UK trade deficit widened to a record £16.159bn in January from £2.337bn in December. Exports tumbled 8.3% as good sales fell 15.8%, dragged down by a 22.2% fall in exports to EU countries and a 9.6% decrease in those to non-EU countries. Meanwhile, imports rose 16% as good purchases surged 21.8% amid increases from both EU countries and non-EU countries.

The UK's unemployment rate declined to 3.9% in the 3-months to January, the lowest in two years and below market expectations of 4%. The labour market report also showed the number of employees on payroll was up 275,324 to an all-time high of 29.67 million in February, while job vacancies hit a new record of 1.318 million. Average weekly earnings including bonuses in the UK increased 4.8% y/y in the three months to January, above 4.6% in the previous period and market forecasts of an unchanged rate. Similarly, average weekly earnings excluding bonuses rose 3.8%, also above 3.7% in the three months to December, and expectations also of 3.7%.

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, increased to 6.2% y/y in February from 5.5% in January and above market forecasts of 5.9%. This represents the highest inflation rate since 1992, as the rising cost of energy and food continues to squeeze household incomes. Against this backdrop, the Monetary Policy Committee voted by a majority of 8-1 to raise Bank Rate by 25bps to 0.75% at its March 2022 meeting, in line with expectations. The Committee judged that some further modest tightening in monetary policy may be appropriate in the coming months, in particular as the invasion of Ukraine by Russia is likely to accentuate both the peak and longevity of above target inflation and the expected adverse impact on activity.

Meanwhile, retail sales unexpectedly fell 0.3% m/m in February, partly reversing a 1.9% rise in January and compared to market forecasts of a 0.6% increase. Compared to pre-pandemic levels of February 2020, retail sales have increased 3.7%. Meanwhile, the GfK Consumer Confidence index dropped to its lowest level in 16 months at -31 in March, amid mounting concerns about surging inflation, higher interest rates and the Ukraine conflict. This followed a reading of -26 in February and was slightly lower than expectations of -30.

The UK government recorded a £13.1 billion deficit in its public finances in February, much higher than market expectations of £8.1 billion. This represented the second-highest February borrowing since monthly records began in 1993. As a result, borrowing reached £138.4 billion in the financial year-to-February. This was the third-highest financial year-to-February borrowing since monthly records began in 1993 but less than half of the £290.9 billion borrowed in the same period last year.

The US economy added 678,000 payrolls in February, the most in seven months and well above market forecasts of 400,000. As a result, the US unemployment rate edged down to 3.8% from 4% previously, representing a new pandemic low and below market expectations of 3.9%. The US economy expanded an annualised 6.9% on quarter in the last three months of 2021, 0.1% lower than in the second estimate. Against this backdrop, price growth (as measured by the Federal Reserve's preferred Personal Consumption Expenditure deflator) accelerated to 7.9% in February, the highest since January 1982, matching market expectations. Following its February decision to make no policy change, the Fed raised the target for its Fed Funds rate by a quarter-point to 0.25%-0.5% at its March meeting. This was the first hike for three years with the following press conference and associated "dot plot" of Fed member expectations signalling that this was likely the first of a series of policy tightening measures. While the Fed stated that conditions at the time of meetings would determine any action, the forecasts now sees rate hikes at each of the six remaining meetings this year.

The Eurozone economy advanced 0.3% on quarter in the last three months of 2021, matching flash estimates, as the Omicron variant's spread across the continent later in the year brought about restrictions which hurt the services sector, as well as labour shortages. The annual inflation rate in the Euro Area rose to a fresh record high of 5.9% y/y in February from 5.1% in January. Energy continued to record the biggest source of price increases. Core inflation, which excludes prices of energy, food, alcohol and tobacco, accelerated to 2.7% in February from 2.3% in January. The ECB voted to maintain interest rates at its March meeting. However, the ECB surprisingly sped up the asset purchase schedule for the coming months and said that the asset purchase program could end in the third quarter if the medium-term inflation outlook did not weaken. The Bank also confirmed that monthly net asset purchases would amount to €40 billion in Q2, €30 billion in Q3 and €20 billion from October onwards and for as long as necessary to reinforce the accommodative impact of its policy rates.

Housing

The Nationwide House Price Index jumped 14.3% y/y in March, the strongest increase since November 2004, and above forecasts of 13.5%. On a monthly basis, prices increased 1.1%, also above forecasts of 0.8%, the eighth consecutive monthly increase. The price of a typical UK home climbed to a new record high. According to Nationwide, prices are now 21% higher than before the pandemic struck in early 2020.

Currency

Sterling depreciated against both the US dollar and Euro this month amid the ongoing war in Ukraine and surging commodity prices, which raised the prospect of slowing growth and high inflation in the UK.

March	Start	End	High	Low
GBP/USD	\$1.3938	\$1.3797	\$1.3991	\$1.3712
GBP/EUR	€1.1565	€1.1739	€1.1739	€1.1565

Forecast

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee increased the Bank Rate by 0.25% to 0.75% at its March meeting, which was in line with Link Group's forecast.

Bank Rate	Now	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24
Link Group	0.75%	1.00%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%	1.25%
Capital Economics	0.75%	1.00%	1.25%	1.25%	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.00%	-	-	-	-

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Current Investment List

Borrower	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date	Lowest LT / Fund Rating	Historic Risk of Default	Expected Credit Loss (£)
MMF Aberdeen Standard Investments	25,900,000	0.50%		MMF	AAAm		
MMF CCLA	34,500,000	0.58%		MMF	AAAm		
MMF Deutsche	20,600,000	0.49%		MMF	AAAm		
MMF Federated Investors (UK)	26,500,000	0.50%		MMF	AAAm		
MMF Invesco	20,000,000	0.49%		MMF	AAAm		
USDBF Aberdeen Standard Investments	50,395,568	0.07%		USDBF	AAAf		
USDBF Federated Sterling Cash Plus Fund	25,346,349	-0.01%		USDBF	AAAf		
USDBF Payden Sterling Reserve Fund	61,347,703	-0.83%		USDBF	AAAf		
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen Girozentrale (Helaba)	25,000,000	0.18%	13/08/2021	13/05/2022	A	0.005%	1358
DBS Bank Ltd	20,000,000	0.40%	05/01/2022	06/06/2022	AA-	0.004%	841
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	25,000,000	0.28%	27/09/2021	27/06/2022	A	0.011%	2780
Leeds Building Society	20,000,000	0.14%	02/07/2021	01/07/2022	A-	0.012%	2325
Santander UK PLC	20,000,000	0.57%		Call95	A	0.012%	2401
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	20,000,000	0.17%	05/07/2021	05/07/2022	A	0.012%	2426
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen Girozentrale (Helaba)	25,000,000	0.16%	16/07/2021	18/07/2022	A	0.014%	3443
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen Girozentrale (Helaba)	25,000,000	0.16%	16/07/2021	18/07/2022	A	0.014%	3443
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	25,000,000	0.18%	09/08/2021	09/08/2022	A	0.017%	4138
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	25,000,000	0.19%	13/08/2021	12/08/2022	A	0.017%	4232
DBS Bank Ltd	20,000,000	1.57%	21/03/2022	21/09/2022	AA-	0.011%	2184
Toronto Dominion Bank	20,000,000	0.56%	22/12/2021	22/09/2022	AA-	0.011%	2196
Santander UK PLC	30,000,000	0.75%		Call180	A	0.023%	6823
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd	90,000,000	0.93%		Call185	A+	0.023%	21036
Goldman Sachs International Bank	20,000,000	0.24%		Call185	A+	0.023%	4675
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Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	25,000,000	0.37%	01/10/2021	03/10/2022	A	0.023%	5875
National Australia Bank Ltd	25,000,000	0.49%	13/10/2021	13/10/2022	A+	0.025%	6191
National Australia Bank Ltd	20,000,000	0.50%	15/10/2021	17/10/2022	A+	0.025%	5054
Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen Girozentrale (Helaba)	25,000,000	0.69%	26/10/2021	26/10/2022	A	0.026%	6601
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	10,000,000	0.67%	26/10/2021	26/10/2022	A	0.026%	2641
Yorkshire Building Society	20,000,000	0.55%	17/11/2021	17/11/2022	A-	0.029%	5837
DBS Bank Ltd	20,000,000	0.70%	05/01/2022	05/12/2022	AA-	0.016%	3125
Goldman Sachs International Bank	20,000,000	0.76%	08/12/2021	08/12/2022	A+	0.032%	6368
DBS Bank Ltd	20,000,000	1.75%	21/03/2022	21/12/2022	AA-	0.017%	3326
Toronto Dominion Bank	20,000,000	0.69%	22/12/2021	22/12/2022	AA-	0.017%	3338
Goldman Sachs International Bank	20,000,000	0.33%		Call270	A+	0.034%	6823
Toronto Dominion Bank	20,000,000	0.91%	12/01/2022	12/01/2023	AA-	0.018%	3602
National Australia Bank Ltd	20,000,000	1.30%	07/02/2022	07/02/2023	A+	0.040%	7909

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Current Investment List

Borrower	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date	Lowest LT / Fund Rating	Historic Risk of Default	Expected Credit Loss (£)
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	20,000,000	1.66%	16/02/2022	16/02/2023	A	0.041%	8136
Toronto Dominion Bank	20,000,000	2.07%	17/03/2022	17/03/2023	AA-	0.022%	4405
Santander UK PLC	50,000,000	0.85%		Call365	A	0.046%	23058
Borrower - Funds	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date			
L&G	77,998,427	-3.24%					
ROYAL LONDON	78,392,334	-2.46%					
Total Investments	£1,225,980,381	0.08%					
Total Investments - excluding Funds	£1,069,589,620	0.51%				0.022%	£175,935
Total Investments - Funds Only	£156,390,761	-2.85%					

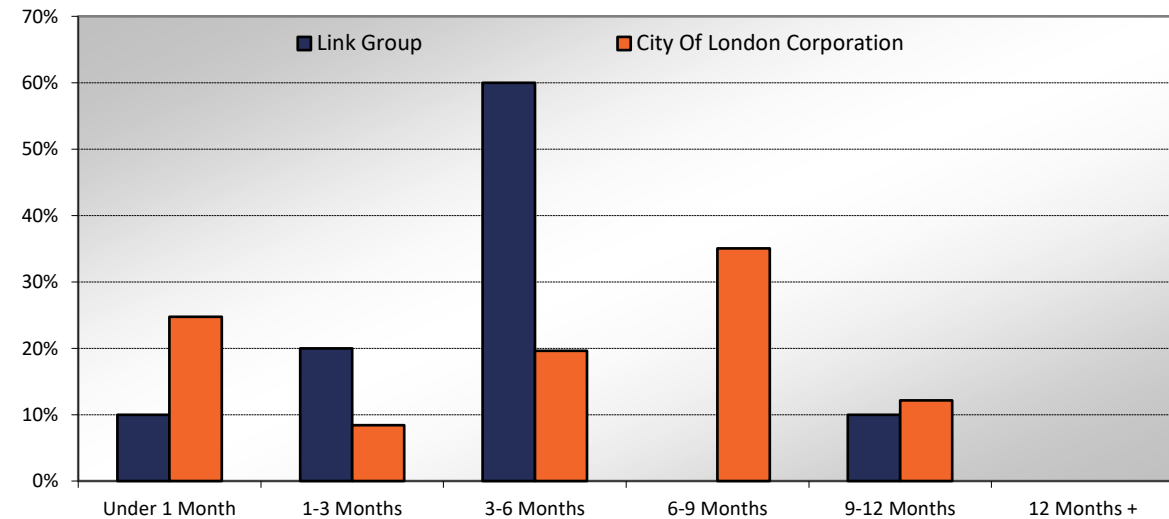
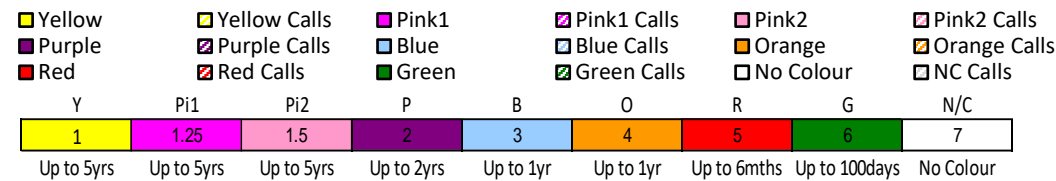
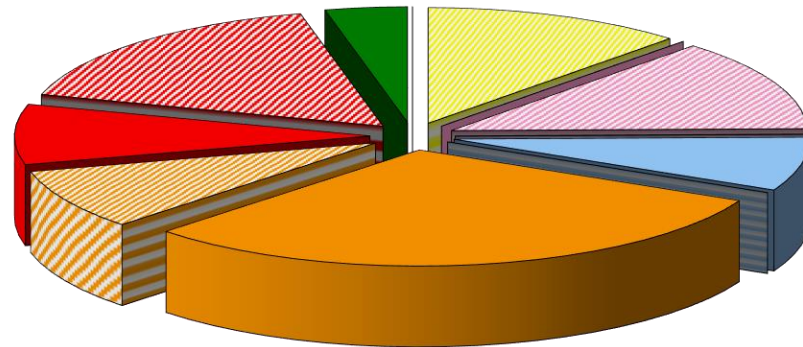
Note: An historic risk of default and expected credit loss are only provided if a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and are not provided for an MMF or USDBF, for which the rating agencies provide a fund rating. The portfolio's historic risk of default and expected credit loss therefore measure the historic risk of default and expected credit loss attached only to those investments for which a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and also do not include investments which are not rated.

The Historic Risk of Default column is based on the lowest long term rating. If clients are using this % for their Expected Credit Loss calculation under IFRS 9, please be aware that the Code does not recognise a loss allowance where the counterparty is central government or a local authority since relevant statutory provisions prevent default. For these instruments, the Expected Credit Loss will be nil. Please note that we are currently using Historic Default Rates from 1990-2021 for Fitch, 1983-2021 for Moody's and 1981-2021 for S&P.

Where Link Group have provided a return for a property fund, that return covers the 12 months to December 2021, which are the latest returns currently available.

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Portfolio Composition by Link Group's Suggested Lending Criteria



Portfolios weighted average risk number = **3.57**

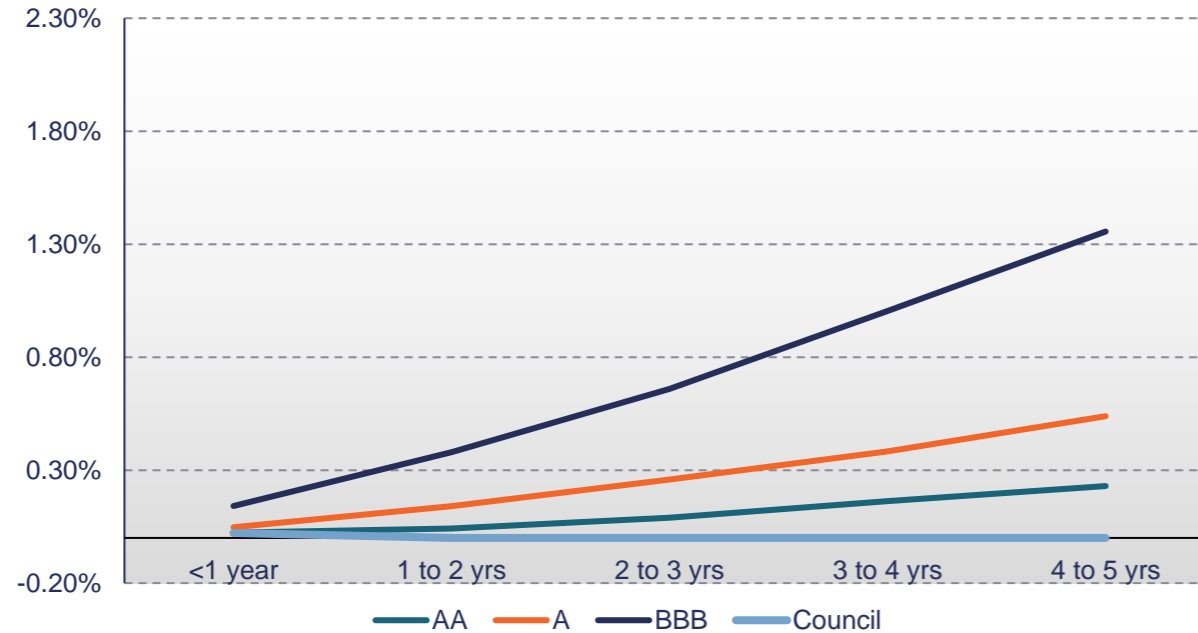
WARoR = Weighted Average Rate of Return
WAM = Weighted Average Time to Maturity

	% of Portfolio	Amount	% of Colour in Calls	Amount of Colour in Calls	% of Call in Portfolio	WARoR	WAM	WAM at Execution	Excluding Calls/MMFs/USDBFs	
									WAM	WAM at Execution
Yellow	11.92%	£127,500,000	100.00%	£127,500,000	11.92%	0.52%	0	0	0	0
Pink1	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Pink2	12.82%	£137,089,620	100.00%	£137,089,620	12.82%	-0.35%	0	0	0	0
Purple	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Blue	7.48%	£80,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.24%	133	365	133	365
Orange	38.80%	£415,000,000	21.69%	£90,000,000	8.41%	0.81%	193	292	196	321
Red	25.24%	£270,000,000	66.67%	£180,000,000	16.83%	0.60%	224	269	204	340
Green	3.74%	£40,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.35%	162	365	162	365
No Colour	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Total	100.00%	#####	49.98%	£534,589,620	49.98%	0.51%	147	222	185	334

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Investment Risk and Rating Exposure

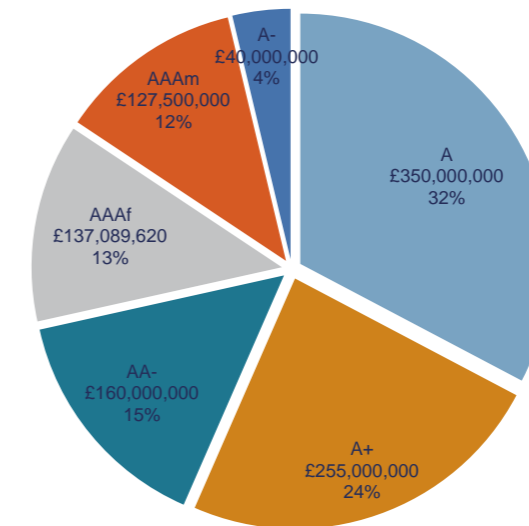
Investment Risk Vs. Rating Categories



Historic Risk of Default

Rating/Years	<1 year	1 to 2 yrs	2 to 3 yrs	3 to 4 yrs	4 to 5 yrs
AA	0.02%	0.04%	0.09%	0.16%	0.23%
A	0.05%	0.14%	0.26%	0.38%	0.54%
BBB	0.14%	0.38%	0.66%	1.01%	1.36%
Council	0.022%	0.000%	0.000%	0.000%	0.000%

Rating Exposure



Historic Risk of Default

This is a proxy for the average % risk for each investment based on over 30 years of data provided by Fitch, Moody's and S&P. It simply provides a calculation of the possibility of average default against the historical default rates, adjusted for the time period within each year according to the maturity of the investment.

Chart Relative Risk

This is the authority's risk weightings compared to the average % risk of default for "AA", "A" and "BBB" rated investments.

Rating Exposures

This pie chart provides a clear view of your investment exposures to particular ratings.

Note: An historic risk of default is only provided if a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and is not provided for an MMF or USDBF, for which the rating agencies provide a fund rating. The portfolio's historic risk of default therefore measures the historic risk of default attached only to those investments for which a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and also does not include investments which are not rated.

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Monthly Credit Rating Changes FITCH

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
17/03/2022	1884	Bayerische Landesbank	Germany	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
18/03/2022	1885	Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg	Germany	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
25/03/2022	1887	Co-operative Bank PLC (The)	United Kingdom	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
28/03/2022	1888	Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd.	Australia	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
28/03/2022	1888	Commonwealth Bank of Australia	Australia	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
28/03/2022	1888	National Australia Bank Ltd	Australia	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
28/03/2022	1888	Westpac Banking Corp.	Australia	The Support Rating was withdrawn.

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Monthly Credit Rating Changes MOODY'S

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
01/03/2022	1883	Swedbank AB	Sweden	The Long Term Rating was placed on Negative Outlook and removed from Negative Watch.

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Monthly Credit Rating Changes S&P

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
22/03/2022	1886	Landesbank Hessen-Thuringen Girozentrale	Germany	The Long Term Rating was upgraded to 'A' from 'A-' and the Short Term Rating was upgraded to 'A-1' from 'A-2'.

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