

23 April 2020

AJ Bell plc
Q2 trading update

AJ Bell plc (“AJ Bell” or the “Company”), one of the UK’s largest investment platforms, today issues a trading update in respect of the three months ended 31 March 2020.

Performance overview

Total customer numbers increased to 262,179, up 22% over the last 12 months and 9% in the quarter, with total net inflows up 30% compared to prior year at £1.3 billion (2019: £1.0 billion).

Total assets under administration (AUA) increased by 1% over the last year, closing at £48.3 billion. AUA fell by 12% in the quarter due to adverse market and other movements. The FTSE All-share was down 26% over the same period.

AJ Bell’s customer growth and strong net inflows during the quarter were driven by the platform business:

- Platform customer numbers increased organically by 20,872, a record quarter for AJ Bell
- Total platform customers closed at 248,074, up 23% year-on-year and 9% in the quarter
 - Advised customers of 103,974, up 11% over the last year and 4% in the quarter
 - D2C customers of 144,100, up 34% over the last year and 13% in the quarter
- Platform underlying net inflows, representing organic growth in the quarter, increased by 75% over the prior year to £1.4 billion (2019: £0.8 billion)
 - Underlying net inflows of £0.7 billion on each of the Advised and D2C platforms (2019: £0.4 billion on both Advised and D2C platforms)
- Platform AUA closed at £42.0 billion, up 3% over the last year and down 11% in the quarter

Andy Bell, Chief Executive Officer at AJ Bell, commented:

“This quarter was without doubt one of the most dramatic we’ve witnessed. We had to move quickly to keep our people safe from COVID-19 and comply with the Government lockdown. I’m pleased that we were able to do that effectively whilst remaining open for business as usual during a very busy tax year end period. I’d like to thank our staff for the flexibility and dedication they have shown to ensure our customers have been able to access and manage their investments as usual during the lockdown.

“This resilience is reflected in our new business figures which are very strong compared to last year. Our platform delivered encouraging organic growth in both customers and net inflows as we continued to support advisers and customers throughout this unprecedented situation.

“The COVID-19 crisis continues to have a devastating impact on people’s lives and the economic outlook remains uncertain. We have confirmed that we are not furloughing any staff or claiming benefits from any of the Government’s financial support schemes which should be preserved for those companies that need them most. We have also launched the AJ Bell Wage War on COVID Fund under

the umbrella of the AJ Bell Trust, a UK registered charity, which will benefit charities and causes supporting the COVID-19 efforts. In addition to a £50,000 donation from the AJ Bell Trust, I will be donating my April, May and June wages into the fund and other board directors, senior management and staff have made similar pledges.”

AJ Bell’s full response to the COVID-19 crisis can be found [here](#).

Three months ended 31 March 2020	Advised Platform £billion	D2C Platform £billion	Total Platform £billion	Non- platform £billion	Total £billion
Opening AUA	35.2	12.0	47.2	7.5	54.7
Underlying inflows ⁽¹⁾	1.2	0.9	2.1	-	2.1
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.5)	(0.2)	(0.7)	(0.3)	(1.0)
Underlying net inflows/(outflows)	0.7	0.7	1.4	(0.3)	1.1
DB inflows ⁽³⁾	0.2	-	0.2	-	0.2
Total net inflows/(outflows)	0.9	0.7	1.6	(0.3)	1.3
Market and other movements ⁽⁴⁾	(4.7)	(2.1)	(6.8)	(0.9)	(7.7)
Closing AUA	31.4	10.6	42.0	6.3	48.3
Opening customers	100,170	127,032	227,202	13,950	241,152
Closing customers	103,974	144,100	248,074	14,105	262,179

Three months ended 31 March 2019	Advised Platform £billion	D2C Platform £billion	Total Platform £billion	Non- platform £billion	Total £billion
Opening AUA	28.6	8.7	37.3	6.9	44.2
Underlying inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.8	0.5	1.3	0.1	1.4
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.4)	(0.1)	(0.5)	(0.1)	(0.6)
Underlying net inflows	0.4	0.4	0.8	-	0.8
DB inflows ⁽³⁾	0.2	-	0.2	-	0.2
Total net inflows	0.6	0.4	1.0	-	1.0
Market and other movements ⁽⁴⁾	1.7	0.6	2.3	0.2	2.5
Closing AUA	30.9	9.7	40.6	7.1	47.7
Opening customers	90,865	99,633	190,498	13,985	204,483
Closing customers	93,496	107,426	200,922	13,931	214,853

(1) Includes transfers-in, subscriptions, contributions and tax relief, excluding inflows from DB pension transfers and bulk migrations

(2) Includes transfers-out, cash withdrawals, benefits and tax payments

(3) Inflows to the advised platform from defined benefit pension transfers

(4) Includes charges, taxes deducted, investment returns and revaluations

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Historical AUA and customer numbers by quarter

Advised Platform	Qtr to 31 March 2019	Qtr to 30 June 2019	Qtr to 30 September 2019	Qtr to 31 December 2019	Qtr to 31 March 2020
AUA (£billion)					
Opening AUA	28.6	30.9	32.8	33.8	35.2
Underlying inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.2
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.5)
Underlying net inflows	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.7
DB inflows ⁽³⁾	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total net inflows	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.9
Market and other movements ⁽⁴⁾	1.7	1.2	0.3	0.8	(4.7)
Closing AUA	30.9	32.8	33.8	35.2	31.4
Customers	93,496	96,083	98,056	100,170	103,974
D2C Platform					
AUA (£billion)					
Opening AUA	8.7	9.7	10.6	11.1	12.0
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.9
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)
Net inflows	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7
Market and other movements ⁽⁴⁾	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.6	(2.1)
Closing AUA	9.7	10.6	11.1	12.0	10.6
Customers	107,426	114,682	120,113	127,032	144,100
Non-platform					
AUA (£billion)					
Opening AUA	6.9	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.5
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.1	-	-	-	-
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.1)	-	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.3)
Net outflows	-	-	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.3)
Market and other movements ⁽⁴⁾	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	(0.9)
Closing AUA	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.5	6.3
Customers	13,931	13,879	13,897	13,950	14,105
Total closing AUA	47.7	50.7	52.3	54.7	48.3

(1) Includes transfers-in, subscriptions, contributions and tax relief, excluding inflows from DB pension transfers and bulk migrations

(2) Includes transfers-out, cash withdrawals, benefits and tax payments

(3) Inflows to the advised platform from defined benefit pension transfers

(4) Includes charges, taxes deducted, investment returns and revaluations

About AJ Bell:

Established in 1995, AJ Bell is one of the largest investment platforms in the UK.

We operate in both the advised and direct to consumer segments of the platform market and our flagship platform propositions are AJ Bell Investcentre (adviser) and AJ Bell Youinvest (direct-to-consumer).

We offer SIPPs, ISAs and General Investment / Dealing Accounts. We aim to make it easy for our customers to invest by providing them with additional support in the form of various investment solutions and information. We offer a broad investment range including shares and other instruments traded on the major stock exchanges around the world, as well as all mainstream collective investments available in the UK and our own range of AJ Bell funds.

AJ Bell is headquartered in Manchester, UK.

Forward-looking statements

This announcement contains forward-looking statements that involve substantial risks and uncertainties, and actual results and developments may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these statements. These forward-looking statements are statements regarding AJ Bell's intentions, beliefs or current expectations concerning, among other things, its results of operations, financial condition, prospects, growth, strategies and the industry in which it operates. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties because they relate to events and depend on circumstances that may or may not occur in the future. These forward-looking statements speak only as of the date of this announcement and AJ Bell does not undertake any obligation to publicly release any revisions to these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this announcement.