

20 January 2022

AJ Bell plc
Q1 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 December 2021.

Performance overview

Total customer numbers increased to 398,066, up 27% over the last year and 4% in the quarter, with total net inflows in the quarter of £1.3 billion.

Total assets under administration (“AUA”) increased to £75.6 billion, up 21% over the last year and 4% in the quarter. Over the same quarter the FTSE All-Share Index rose by 3.7%.

This performance was delivered against a very different market backdrop to that seen in the comparative quarter last year, when stricter government restrictions helped to drive AJ Bell’s total customer growth, gross inflows and net inflows to record levels. The continued growth in Q1 evidences the resilience of the AJ Bell business model in different market conditions and was again driven by the Company’s platform propositions and investment business.

Platform business

- Customer numbers increased by 15,309 in the quarter to close at 383,274, up 29% in the last year and 4% in the quarter
 - Advised customers of 131,610, up 17% in the last year and 4% in the quarter
 - D2C customers of 251,664, up 35% in the last year and 4% in the quarter
- AUA closed at £68.1 billion, up 23% in the last year and 4% in the quarter
- Gross inflows in the quarter of £2.7 billion, up 23% on the prior year (2020: £2.2 billion)
- Net inflows of £1.4 billion, down 7% on the prior year (2020: £1.5 billion). This was due to an exceptional bulk annuity purchase, previously signalled in the FY21 year-end trading update in October, which resulted in a one-off outflow of £241 million from both advised platform AUA and AJ Bell Investments AUM in the quarter
 - Advised net inflows of £0.6 billion in the quarter. Excluding the impact of the exceptional outflow, underlying net inflows were £0.9 billion, up 13% on the prior year (2020: £0.8 billion)
 - D2C net inflows of £0.8 billion in the quarter, up 14% on the prior year (2020: £0.7 billion)

AJ Bell Investments

- Assets under management (“AUM”) closed at £2.1 billion, up 110% over the last year and down 5% in the quarter due to the £241 million exceptional outflow explained above
- Excluding the impact of this one-off outflow, underlying net inflows in the quarter were £182 million (2020: £147 million)

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

“We have had a solid start to our new financial year with customer numbers, gross inflows and assets under administration all growing steadily. We continue to see strong demand for our easy to use, low-cost platform across both the advised and direct-to-consumer markets.

“In the advised market we had our second-best quarter ever for customer acquisition with 4,690 net new advised customers added in the quarter, 38% more than in the same period last year. Gross inflows of £1.6 billion to our advised platform were 23% higher than the comparative period and underlying net inflows were robust in what is normally a quieter period for asset flows.

“The direct-to-consumer market continues to grow strongly, with increasing numbers of people being drawn to the benefits of personal investing. In the quarter we delivered further growth in D2C customers and AUA and are now entrusted with over £20 billion of assets by a quarter of a million retail investors.

“Our trusted brand and easy to use platform propositions, supported by our increasingly popular investment solutions, ensure that we are well positioned to deliver further growth in both the advised and D2C markets and we approach the traditionally busy tax year end period with optimism.”

Three months ended 31 December 2021	Advised Platform	D2C Platform	Total Platform	Non- platform	Total
Opening customers	126,920	241,045	367,965	14,789	382,754
Closing customers	131,610	251,664	383,274	14,792	398,066

AUA and AUM (£billion)

Opening AUA	45.8	19.5	65.3	7.5	72.8
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	1.6	1.1	2.7	0.1	2.8
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(1.0)	(0.3)	(1.3)	(0.2)	(1.5)
Net inflows/(outflows)	0.6	0.8	1.4	(0.1)	1.3
Market and other movements ⁽³⁾	1.1	0.3	1.4	0.1	1.5
Closing AUA	47.5	20.6	68.1	7.5	75.6
Closing AUM	1.2	0.9	2.1⁽⁴⁾	-	2.1

Three months ended 31 December 2020	Advised Platform	D2C Platform	Total Platform	Non- platform	Total
Opening customers	108,911	172,183	281,094	14,211	295,305
Closing customers	112,308	185,745	298,053	14,256	312,309

AUA and AUM (£billion)

Opening AUA	36.3	13.4	49.7	6.8	56.5
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	1.3	0.9	2.2	0.1	2.3
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.5)	(0.2)	(0.7)	-	(0.7)
Net inflows	0.8	0.7	1.5	0.1	1.6
Market and other movements ⁽³⁾	2.6	1.4	4.0	0.4	4.4
Closing AUA	39.7	15.5	55.2	7.3	62.5
Closing AUM	0.6	0.4	1.0⁽⁴⁾	-	1.0

(1) Transfers-in, subscriptions, contributions and tax relief

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

(3) Total investment returns and revaluations, net of charges and taxes

(4) Platform AUA which is held in AJ Bell's Funds or Managed Portfolio Service

Contacts:

AJ Bell

- Shaun Yates, Investor Relations Director +44 (0) 7522 235 898
- Charlie Musson, Brand and PR Director +44 (0) 7834 499 554

Historical customer numbers, AUA and AUM by quarter

Advised Platform	Qtr to 31 December 2020	Qtr to 31 March 2021	Qtr to 30 June 2021	Qtr to 30 September 2021	Qtr to 31 December 2021
Customers	112,308	118,509	122,757	126,920	131,610

AUA and AUM (£billion)					
Opening AUA	36.3	39.7	41.1	44.2	45.8
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	1.3	1.5	1.8	1.7	1.6
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.5)	(0.6)	(0.7)	(0.7)	(1.0)
Net inflows	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.6

Market and other movements ⁽³⁾	2.6	0.5	2.0	0.6	1.1
Closing AUA	39.7	41.1	44.2	45.8	47.5

Closing AUM ⁽⁴⁾	0.6	0.8	1.2	1.3	1.2
----------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

D2C Platform	Qtr to 31 December 2020	Qtr to 31 March 2021	Qtr to 30 June 2021	Qtr to 30 September 2021	Qtr to 31 December 2021
Customers	185,745	213,767	230,542	241,045	251,664

AUA and AUM (£billion)					
Opening AUA	13.4	15.5	16.9	18.9	19.5
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.1
Outflows ⁽²⁾	(0.2)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.3)
Net inflows	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.6	0.8

Market and other movements ⁽³⁾	1.4	0.5	1.0	-	0.3
Closing AUA	15.5	16.9	18.9	19.5	20.6

Closing AUM ⁽⁴⁾	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9
----------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Non-platform	Qtr to 31 December 2020	Qtr to 31 March 2021	Qtr to 30 June 2021	Qtr to 30 September 2021	Qtr to 31 December 2021
Customers	14,256	14,521	14,734	14,789	14,792

AUA and AUM (£billion)					
Opening AUA	6.8	7.3	7.2	7.3	7.5
Inflows ⁽¹⁾	0.1	-	0.1	-	0.1
Outflows ⁽²⁾	-	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.1)	(0.2)
Net inflows/(outflows)	0.1	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.1)	(0.1)

Market and other movements ⁽³⁾	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1
Closing AUA	7.3	7.2	7.3	7.5	7.5

Closing AUM ⁽⁵⁾	-	-	0.1	0.1	-
----------------------------	---	---	-----	-----	---

Total closing AUA	62.5	65.2	70.4	72.8	75.6
--------------------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------

Total closing AUM	1.0	1.4	2.0	2.2	2.1
--------------------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

(1) Transfers-in, subscriptions, contributions and tax relief

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

(3) Total investment returns and revaluations, net of charges and taxes

(4) Platform AUA which is held in AJ Bell's Funds or Managed Portfolio Service

(5) Assets which are held in AJ Bell's Funds or Managed Portfolio Service via third-party platforms

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 which provide access to 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. We also offer a Cash savings hub which provides access to a range of competitive savings accounts to help people manage their cash savings.

We aim to make it easy for our customers to save and invest by providing them with online tools and information to help them build and manage their portfolios.

AJ Bell is headquartered in Manchester, UK, with offices in London and Bristol.

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.