

### Interim Long Report and Unaudited Financial Statements Six months ended 29 February 2020

# **AXA Framlington Biotech Fund**





# Issued by AXA Investment Managers UK Ltd authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

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\* These collectively comprise the Authorised Fund Manager's ("the Manager's") Report for the Trust.

More information on any AXA unit trust, copies of the latest Manager's Reports and Prospectus are available free of charge. Telephone 0345 777 5511 or visit our website: www.axa-im.co.uk. Telephone calls may be recorded or monitored for quality assurance purposes.



# **Fund Objective**

The aim of AXA Framlington Biotech Fund ("the Fund") is to provide long-term capital growth.

The Fund invests in shares of listed companies, principally (meaning at least 80% of its assets) in the biotechnology, genomic and medical research industry, which the Manager believes will provide above-average returns. The Fund invests in companies of any size which can be based anywhere in the world, albeit the Fund tends to be biased towards the US as this is where the majority of biotechnology companies are based. The Manager selects shares based upon analysis of a company's financial status, quality of its management, expected profitability and prospects for growth.

The Manager has full discretion to select investments for the Fund in line with the above investment policy and in doing so may take into consideration the NASDAQ Biotechnology Price Return index.

The NASDAQ Biotechnology Price Return index is designed to measure the performance of NASDAQ stocks in the biotechnology sector. This index best represents a core component of the Managers' investment universe.

This Fund is actively managed in reference to the NASDAQ Biotechnology Price Return index, which may be used by investors to compare the Fund's performance.



### **Investment Review**

After a very challenging first half of 2019, the Nasdaq Biotechnology Index (NBI) regained losses and exceeded the year-to-date highs by year-end. Positive macroeconomic market support, and arguably an overly negative move just before the period under review, supported the recovery. In terms of specific sector catalysts in the last three months of 2019, we saw a good number of positive research and development (R&D) updates, including first in human data for technologies such as gene editing. The US Food Drug Administration (FDA) and was accommodating of drug developers approving new drugs in record time, as little as three months in the case of Vertex's new therapy to treat Cystic Fibrosis. There was also another surprise update, which improved sentiment: The decision by Biogen, after discussions with the FDA, to submit aducanumab for approval to treat Alzheimer's disease following positive Phase III data. The reason this was such a surprise was that Biogen had halted trials earlier in the year because <u>USA e</u>

| Top Ten Holdings          |      |
|---------------------------|------|
| as at 29 February 2020    | %    |
| Biogen                    | 8.56 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Amgen                     | 8.04 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Regeneron Pharmaceuticals | 6.63 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Gilead Sciences           | 6.48 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Alexion Pharmaceuticals   | 5.07 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Vertex Pharmaceuticals    | 4.39 |
| USA equities              |      |
| BioMarin Pharmaceutical   | 4.22 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Seattle Genetics          | 3.38 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Incyte                    | 2.91 |
| USA equities              |      |
| Illumina                  | 2.72 |
| USA equities              |      |

management originally believed the trials were unlikely to be successful. The FDA's decision on approval, expected in early 2021, will be important for patients, Biogen and the biotechnology sector.

From 1 September 2019 to the end of February 2020, the NBI delivered around 11%, the MSCI World Healthcare Index 2.7% and S & P 500 around 1%, all in US dollar terms.

The AXA Framlington Biotech Fund outperformed the NBI benchmark over the period. The AXA Framlington Biotech Fund outperformed the NBI benchmark over the period when taking into consideration differences in valuation timing between the Fund and the benchmark. We hold several companies that reported encouraging R&D pipeline updates, which contributed to the outperformance. These include Acceleron Pharma, Principia BioPharma and Momenta Pharma. Zai Labs, a Chinese biotech holding, also outperformed, as the early launch of their oncology asset in Hong Kong went well, with the business model generating interest from investors. The Fund also had an overweight position in Biogen due to its positive update on aducanumab. We continue to think that Biogen's risk-reward profile looks good here. We believe there is very little included in the current share price for aducanumab approval, but we think this outcome should warrant greater than a 50% probability of success. Our investment in Molecular Templates, an early-stage company with a compelling technology platform, was also a main contributor to performance. The stock is up close to 200% since it was bought in the Fund.

The two main detractors to performance were Stemline Therapeutics and Alexion. Both have been large positions in the Fund for some time. We still believe there is a sizeable commercial opportunity for Stemline's lead asset, Elzonris. However, we are concerned about the volatility in launch patterns and increasingly unachievable analyst forecasts. Further, without additional commercial expansion, the profitability of this single asset business will be a question. We therefore no longer hold the stock. In the case of Alexion, commercial execution has been exemplary. However, investors are concerned about the longer-term sustainability of the group's commercial franchise. With the view that the group's pipeline is not broad enough to supplement growth, the stock has traded down sharply. We do not agree with the concern over top-line growth and see the value of the business (excluding the pipeline) significantly exceeding the current share price. However, we believe it will take pipeline success to increase the price investors are willing to pay and we are therefore focused here. We remain holders.



# **Investment Review (Continued)**

The AXA Framlington Biotech Fund is positioned across the market capitalisation spectrum (the value of a company that is traded on a stock market). The larger-capitalisation companies offer a defensive bias and, in our view, remain undervalued relative to their cash flow generation. We have an overweight position in the small- and mid-capitalisation (smid) stocks that are pioneering much of the innovation. Y-mAbs is a stock owned in the portfolio that has generated compelling data in rare forms of childhood cancers. We expect approvals for the first two therapies later in 2020 to early 2021. Turning Point Therapeutics is another US company that is focusing on precision therapy to treat cancer targeting genetic mutations. We believe that Alnylam, Seattle Genetics, Incyte, Agios are well-positioned mid-cap companies with commercial operations, discovery capabilities and technology platforms to discover novel treatments and late-stage pipeline optionality.

#### Outlook

In the near term, coronavirus and the global response to the health emergency are likely to shape the outlook and negatively impact the global economy. Efforts to slow the spread of the virus, such as the closing of country borders and quarantines in affected areas, will likely depress economic activity across multiple sectors. Although speculative at this stage, there are biopharma companies looking to develop medicines to treat and vaccines to prevent infection. Any vaccine regulatory approvals, were there to be any, are 12-18 months off, but development efforts offer much-needed positive publicity for a sector that has seen the brunt of negative press on high drug prices in the US in addition to potential longer-term revenue opportunities.

The US presidential election will take place in November and the news coverage of the race has already started in earnest. Broadly speaking, most believe a Trump victory where Republicans retain a majority in the Senate is the most positive outcome for biopharma. For Democrats, Biden becoming the presidential candidate would be perceived as better than Sanders for biopharma stocks. However, there is nuance to this, including the fact that President Trump has been as vocal and demanding on acting to lower prescription drug pricing as Democrats.

In our view, there seems to be a desire from all sides to rein in the ever-increasing cost of healthcare in the US. Drug pricing is a visible target and one that is seen as easier to tackle than other costs in the system. We therefore expect legislation to be introduced from 2021 in this regard. We don't anticipate draconian government regulation of pricing in the US; it is clear that innovation will continue to be encouraged and paid for, which is good for most of biotech. Biopharma executives are now looking to a much greater extent at how new drugs are priced including an incorporation of value-based pricing models and how much prices are raised year-on-year. In our view, this pragmatic stewardship is critical and being heavily involved in shaping the legislation will be important. We carefully monitor pricing decisions taken by the companies in which we invest. In our view, this will be an increasingly important risk factor to manage along with other aspects of environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices that will influence longer-term share price performance.

As we have previously mentioned, the FDA's decision on commercial approval for aducanumab (Biogen's drug in development to treat Alzheimer's disease) expected in early 2021 will be a catalyst for Biogen, the broader neurology-focused companies and improving sentiment for the entire biotech sector. There was a noticeable impact on sector performance when Biogen terminated its development of the agent (March 2019), and then updated to say the trial was instead a success and the drug would be submitted for approval (October 2019).

We are often asked what the key themes for biotechnology sector will be over the next decade. We highlight the potential emergence of gene editing as a platform to treat genetic diseases, as well as cell and gene therapy, which is already a firmly established technology supporting several newly approved therapies. We may also be on the cusp of a better understanding of the molecular and genetic drivers of some important neurological conditions.



# **Investment Review (Continued)**

#### **Outlook (continued)**

Some of the first treatments in development with a more precise targeted approach are for Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Another theme will be the emergence of biotech in China, both as a market for high-priced innovative therapies and investable Chinese companies developing their own innovation for both domestic and international markets.

We continue to rate the fundamentals that drive value in the biotech sector as good (in fact in many cases, the best we have seen) particularly in small- and mid-cap companies. This should support above-market growth from a longer-term perspective. Further, we see several mid-cap companies that have the opportunity to grow into sector large capitalisations over time. These companies have commercial operations selling innovative in-demand therapies and a pipeline of other drugs in development for longer-term growth. Many also have unique technology platforms, which function as an engine for delivering more products into development. These are companies we are particularly focused on as investments within the Fund.

#### Linden Thomson 29 February 2020

Source of all performance data: AXA Investment Managers, Morningstar to 29 February 2020.

Past performance is not a guide to future performance. All performance figures calculated as follows: Single Priced NAV (Net Asset Value) with zero income reinvested, net of fees in GBP, gross of tax. Performance is representative of R Inc Class.



# **Portfolio Changes**

#### For the period ended 29 February 2020

| Major Purchases                | Cost (£'000) | Major Sales                | Proceeds (£'000) |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Regeneron Pharmaceuticals      | 15,752       | Celgene                    | 13,519           |
| Insmed                         | 5,158        | Gilead Sciences            | 11,266           |
| Gilead Sciences                | 4,782        | Regeneron Pharmaceuticals  | 6,920            |
| Biogen                         | 4,763        | Biogen                     | 6,313            |
| Turning Point Therapeutics     | 4,442        | Blueprint Medicines        | 6,262            |
| Momenta Pharmaceuticals        | 4,166        | Molecular Templates        | 5,500            |
| Amarin ADR                     | 4,045        | Halozyme Therapeutics      | 5,426            |
| UCB                            | 4,042        | Alnylam Pharmaceuticals    | 4,563            |
| Apellis Pharmaceuticals        | 3,623        | Audentes Therapeutics      | 4,527            |
| Seattle Genetics               | 3,218        | Takeda Pharmaceutical      | 4,395            |
| Other purchases                | 30,357       | Other sales                | 60,492           |
| Total purchases for the period | 84,348       | Total sales for the period | 129,183          |

Stocks shown as ADR's represent American Depositary Receipts.



## **Managing Risks**

Past performance is not a guide to future performance. The price of units and the revenue from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. An initial charge is usually made when you purchase units. Changes in exchange rates will affect the value of Fund investments overseas. Investment in smaller companies and newer markets offers the possibility of higher returns but may also involve a higher degree of risk.

The Fund is managed in accordance with the objective set out on page 3. By investing in financial markets there are associated risks and the following explains the Manager's approach to managing those risks.

#### **RISK PROFILE**

As the Fund invests in a single sector it has the potential to be more volatile than a fund which invests in a more diversified portfolio of equities across a range of sectors. The Fund also invests in overseas securities and therefore it may hold currencies other than sterling. As a result, exchange rate movements may cause the value of investments to fall or rise. The Fund invests in companies which are particularly vulnerable to rapidly changing technology and a relatively high risk of obsolescence caused by scientific and technological advances. Investment in biotechnology related businesses may be more volatile than investment in broader healthcare related, or other more diversified industries. The value of investments and the revenue from them is not guaranteed and can go down as well as up.

#### **EQUITY RISK**

The value of shares in which the Fund invests fluctuate pursuant to market expectations. The value of such shares will go up and down and equity markets have historically been more volatile than fixed interest markets. Should the price of shares in which the Fund has invested fall, the Net Asset Value of the Fund will also fall.

Funds investing in shares are generally more volatile than funds investing in bonds or a combination of shares and bonds, but may also achieve greater returns.

Internal investment guidelines are set, if necessary, to ensure equity risk is maintained within a range deemed suitable based on the Fund's investment objectives and investment policy.

#### SMALLER COMPANIES RISK

Investments in smaller companies offers the possibility of higher return but also involve a higher degree of risk than investment in well established, larger companies. The shares of smaller companies can be more volatile which may lead to increased volatility in the Price of the Units of the Fund.

This is an inherent risk for funds invested within smaller companies. Investment guidelines (including diversification measures), scenario testing as well as other regular monitoring seek to ensure the level of risk is aligned with each individual fund's investment objectives and investment policy.

#### **CURRENCY RISK**

Assets of the Fund (including cash), and any income paid on those assets, may be denominated in a currency other than the base currency of the Fund. Changes in the exchange rate between the base currency and the currency of an asset may cause the value of the asset/income (expressed in the base currency) to fall as well as rise even if there is no change of the value of such assets in its local currency. This may also cause additional volatility in the Fund's Price. It may not be possible or practicable to hedge against such exchange rate risk.

The Manager aims to reduce the risk of movements in exchange rates on the value of all or part of the assets of the Fund through the use of currency exchange transactions. The Fund may enter into currency exchange transactions either on a spot basis (i.e., exchanging at the current price) or through forward currency transactions (i.e., agreeing to purchase the currency at an agreed price at a future date). Neither spot transactions nor forward currency transactions will completely



eliminate fluctuations in the prices of the Fund's securities or in foreign exchange rates, or prevent loss if the prices of these securities should decline. The performance of the Fund may be strongly influenced by movements in foreign exchange rates because currency positions held by the Fund may not correspond with the securities positions held.

Although these transactions are intended to minimise the risk of loss due to a decline in the value of the hedged currency, they also limit any potential gain that might be realised should the value of the hedged currency increase. Forward currency transactions may also have the effect of reducing or enhancing the Fund's performance due to the difference between the exchange rate available on such transactions compared to the current (spot) exchange rate. Under normal market conditions this difference in exchange rates is mainly caused by the different short term interest rates applicable to the currency of the assets and the base currency of the Fund. Where the interest rate applying to the foreign currency is higher than that of the Fund's base currency, this can reduce the Fund's performance and vice-versa. This impact on performance is usually far less pronounced than the effect of fluctuations of exchange rates that the use of such transactions is intended to reduce, but the impact can be significant over time, particularly where there is a wide gap between the interest rates applicable to the two currencies. The precise matching of the relevant contract amounts and the value of the securities involved will not generally be possible because the future value of such securities will change as a consequence of market movements in the value of such securities between the date when the relevant contract is entered into and the date when it matures. Therefore, the successful execution of a hedging strategy which matches exactly the profile of the investments of any fund cannot be assured. Furthermore, it may not be possible to hedge against generally anticipated exchange or interest rate fluctuations at a price sufficient to protect the Fund from the anticipated decline in value of its assets as a result of such fluctuations.

Internal investment guidelines are set, if necessary, to ensure currency risk is maintained within a range deemed suitable based on the Fund's investment objectives and investment policy.

#### INDUSTRY SECTOR OR REGION RISK

The Fund may invest in a portfolio of shares which is focused towards one particular market sector or geographic region. This focus may result in higher risk when compared to the Fund that has spread or diversified investments more broadly. Some sectors and regions can experience rapid and extreme price movements when compared with movements in securities markets generally. Investors should note that funds with a specific focus should be considered for investment as part of a wider diversified portfolio.

Internal investment guidelines seek to ensure suitable levels of diversification based on the Fund's investment objectives and investment policy.

#### CHANGING TECHNOLOGY RISK

The Fund may invest in companies which are particularly vulnerable to rapidly changing technology and a relatively high risk of obsolescence caused by scientific and technological advances. In addition, investment in, for example, internet related or biotechnology businesses may be more volatile than investment in broader based technological or healthcare related businesses or other more diversified industries.

Internal investment guidelines seek to ensure suitable levels of diversification based on the Fund's investment objectives and investment policy.



#### **RISK AND REWARD PROFILE**

#### Lower Risk

 $\leftarrow$ 

#### Higher Risk

| Potentially | lower rewa | rd |   | Po | tentially hig | her reward |
|-------------|------------|----|---|----|---------------|------------|
| 1           | 2          | 3  | 4 | 5  | 6             | 7          |

The risk category is calculated using historical performance data and may not be a reliable indicator of the Fund's future risk profile. The risk category shown is not guaranteed and may shift over time. The lowest category does not mean risk free. There has been no change from prior year.

#### WHY IS THIS FUND IN THIS CATEGORY?

The capital of the Fund is not guaranteed. The Fund is invested in financial markets and uses techniques and instruments which may be subject to sudden and significant variation, which may result in substantial gains or losses.

#### **ADDITIONAL RISKS**

Liquidity risk: Under certain market conditions, it may be difficult to buy or sell investments for the Fund. For example, smaller company shares may trade infrequently and in small volumes and corporate and emerging market bonds may be affected by the demand in the market for such securities carrying credit risk, particularly in times of significant market stress. As a result, it may not be possible to buy or sell such investments at a preferred time, close to the last market price quoted or in the volume desired. The Manager may be forced to buy or sell such investments as a consequence of Unitholders buying or selling Units in the Fund. Depending on market conditions at the time, this could lead to a significant drop in the Fund's value.

Weekly monitoring is conducted, using an inhouse liquidity tool, to ensure a high degree of confidence that fund liquidity will meet the Fund's expected liquidity requirements. Any concerns indicated by the tool are analysed by the Manager's risk team who may also discuss the results with portfolio management staff, or other senior professionals within the firm, as needed, to ensure an appropriate scrutiny.

Based on the analysis, the Manager believes that the liquidity profile of the fund is appropriate.

Further explanation of the risks associated with an investment in this Fund can be found in the prospectus.



# **Fund Information**

#### FIVE YEAR PERFORMANCE

In the five years to 29 February 2020, the price of R Income units, with zero income reinvested, rose by +9.20%. The NASDAQ Biotechnology Index (Capital Return) increased by +22.89% over the same time period. During the same period, the price of R Accumulation units, with net income reinvested, rose by +9.39% (Source: AXA Investment Managers and Morningstar) (Prices in GBP).

#### FIVE YEAR DISCRETE PERFORMANCE (DISCRETE YEARS TO LATEST REPORTING DATE)

| Date                      | AXA Framlington Biotech<br>R Inc | NASDAQ Biotechnology<br>(CR) |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 28 Feb 2015 - 29 Feb 2016 | -19.52%                          | -16.43%                      |
| 29 Feb 2016 - 28 Feb 2017 | +25.59%                          | +30.83%                      |
| 28 Feb 2017 - 28 Feb 2018 | +3.66%                           | -1.25%                       |
| 28 Feb 2018 - 28 Feb 2019 | +6.27%                           | +8.02%                       |
| 28 Feb 2019 - 29 Feb 2020 | -1.77%                           | +5.36%                       |

Source: AXA Investment Managers & Morningstar. Basis: Single Price NAV, with zero revenue reinvested, net of fees in GBP.

Past performance is not a guide to future performance.

#### **YIELD**

| R Acc USD | Nil |
|-----------|-----|
| R Inc     | Nil |
| R Acc     | Nil |
| Z Inc     | Nil |
| Z Acc     | Nil |

#### CHARGES

|           | Initial Charge | Annual Management Charge |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------------|
| R Acc USD | Nil            | 1.75%                    |
| R         | Nil            | 1.75%                    |
| Z         | Nil            | 0.75%                    |

#### **ONGOING CHARGES\***

| R Acc USD | 1.83% |
|-----------|-------|
| R Inc     | 1.83% |
| R Acc     | 1.83% |
| Z Inc     | 0.83% |
| Z Acc     | 0.83% |
|           |       |

\* For more information on AXA's fund charges and costs please use the following link https://retail.axa-im.co.uk/fund-charges-and-costs

#### UNIT TRUST INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

The AXA Framlington Biotech Fund is available as a Stocks and Shares ISA through the AXA Investment Managers Stocks and Shares ISA.



## **Comparative Tables**

|   |            | R Inc      |            |            | R Acc      |            |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|   | 29/02/2020 | 31/08/2019 | 31/08/2018 | 29/02/2020 | 31/08/2019 | 31/08/2018 |
| Closing net asset value per unit (p) $^{\dagger}$ | 183.05     | 176.61     | 201.07     | 182.74     | 176.31     | 200.73     |
| Closing net asset value $^{\dagger}$ (£'000)      | 3,361      | 3,921      | 6,466      | 95,591     | 100,955    | 135,555    |
| Closing number of units                           | 1,836,351  | 2,220,342  | 3,216,065  | 52,310,279 | 57,259,911 | 67,530,507 |
| Operating charges <sup>^</sup>                    | 1.83%      | 1.83%      | 1.82%      | 1.83%      | 1.83%      | 1.82%      |
|   |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|   |            | R Acc USD  |            |            |            |            |
|   | 29/02/2020 | 31/08/2019 | 31/08/2018 |            |            |            |
| Closing net asset value per unit $(p)^{\dagger}$  | 90.60      | 87.42      | 99.52      |            |            |            |
| Closing net asset value <sup>+</sup> (£'000)      | 227        | 264        | 13,673     |            |            |            |
| Closing number of units                           | 250,592    | 301,297    | 13,738,035 |            |            |            |
| Operating charges <sup>^</sup>                    | 1.83%      | 1.83%      | 1.82%      |            |            |            |
|   |            |            |            |            |            |            |
|   |            | Z Inc      |            |            | Z Acc      |            |
|   | 29/02/2020 | 31/08/2019 | 31/08/2018 | 29/02/2020 | 31/08/2019 | 31/08/2018 |
| Closing net asset value per unit (p) $^{\dagger}$ | 120.75     | 115.92     | 130.67     | 351.59     | 337.54     | 380.48     |
| Closing net asset value $^{\dagger}$ (£'000)      | 18,494     | 18,760     | 20,565     | 258,097    | 274,056    | 368,897    |
| Closing number of units                           | 15,316,238 | 16,182,990 | 15,737,947 | 73,407,620 | 81,191,098 | 96,955,029 |
| Operating charges <sup>^</sup>                    | 0.83%      | 0.83%      | 0.82%      | 0.83%      | 0.83%      | 0.82%      |

+ Valued at bid-market prices.

^ Operating charges include indirect costs incurred in the maintenance and running of the Fund, as disclosed in expenses within the Statement of Total Return. The figures used within the table have been calculated against the average Net Asset Value for the accounting period.



# **Portfolio Statement**

The AXA Framlington Biotech Fund portfolio as at 29 February 2020 consisted of the following investments, which are ordinary shares unless otherwise stated.

| Holding   |                              | Market value | Total net  |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------|------------|
|           |                              | £'000        | assets (%) |
|           | EUROPE (excluding UK): 8.40% |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 10.10%)         |              |            |
|           | Belgium: 1.11%               |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 0.00%)          |              |            |
| 58,193    | UCB                          | 4,185        | 1.11       |
|           |                              | 4,185        | 1.11       |
|           | Denmark: 1.26%               |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 1.46%)          |              |            |
| 26,986    | Genmab                       | 4,719        | 1.26       |
|           |                              | 4,719        | 1.26       |
|           | France: 1.58%                |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 1.79%)          |              |            |
| 130,243   | Genfit                       | 1,520        | 0.40       |
| 1,832,893 | Valneva                      | 4,418        | 1.18       |
|           |                              | 5,938        | 1.58       |
|           | Germany: 0.00%               |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 0.99%)          |              |            |
|           | Guernsey: 1.33%              |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 1.11%)          |              |            |
| 2,068,419 | Syncona                      | 5,006        | 1.33       |
|           |                              | 5,006        | 1.33       |
|           | Italy: 0.31%                 |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 0.36%)          |              |            |
| 290,827   | Newron Pharmaceuticals       | 1,173        | 0.31       |
|           |                              | 1,173        | 0.31       |
|           | Netherlands: 1.36%           |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 2.14%)          |              |            |
| 46,545    | Argenx ADR                   | 5,126        | 1.36       |
|           |                              | 5,126        | 1.36       |
|           | Sweden: 1.45%                |              |            |
|           | (31/08/2019: 1.27%)          |              |            |
| 416,428   | Swedish Orphan Biovitrum     | 5,467        | 1.45       |
|           |                              | 5,467        | 1.45       |



# **Portfolio Statement (Continued)**

| Holding      |  | Market value | Total net    |
|--------------|--|--------------|--------------|
|              |  | £'000        | assets (%)   |
|              | Switzerland: 0.00%                                       |              |              |
|              | (31/08/2019: 0.98%)                                      |              |              |
|              | JAPAN: 1.79%   |              |              |
|              | (31/08/2019: 2.81%)                                      |              |              |
| 250,634      | Takeda Pharmaceutical                                    | 6,731        | 1.79         |
| ,            |  | 6,731        | 1.79         |
|              | NORTH AMERICA: 84.32%                                    |              |              |
|              | (31/08/2019: 83.90%)                                     |              |              |
|              | Courses Islanda: 2.029/                                  |              |              |
|              | Cayman Islands: 2.92%<br>(31/08/2019: 2.71%)             |              |              |
| 26,577       | BeiGene ADR  | 3,155        | 0.84         |
| 182,709      | Zai Lab ADR  | 7,829        | 2.08         |
| 102,705      |  | 10,984       | 2.08<br>2.92 |
|              |  |              |              |
|              | United States of America: 81.40%<br>(31/08/2019: 81.19%) |              |              |
| 117,024      | Acceleron Pharma   | 7,748        | 2.06         |
| 235,416      | Agios Pharmaceuticals                                    | 8,032        | 2.14         |
| 269,675      | Alexion Pharmaceuticals                                  | 19,055       | 5.07         |
| 111,584      | Alnylam Pharmaceuticals                                  | 9,622        | 2.56         |
| ,<br>193,820 | Amgen  | 30,224       | 8.04         |
| ,<br>665,169 | Amicus Therapeutics                                      | 4,762        | 1.27         |
| ,<br>139,656 | Apellis Pharmaceuticals                                  | 3,601        | 0.96         |
| 164,023      | Arena Pharmaceuticals                                    | 5,542        | 1.47         |
| 205,960      | Assembly Biosciences                                     | 2,802        | 0.74         |
| 135,395      | Biogen   | 32,169       | 8.56         |
| 230,514      | BioMarin Pharmaceutical                                  | 15,870       | 4.22         |
| 187,368      | Denali Therapeutics                                      | 2,733        | 0.73         |
| 17,624       | Esperion Therapeutics                                    | 707          | 0.19         |
| 436,524      | Gilead Sciences  | 24,339       | 6.48         |
| 352,595      | GlycoMimetics  | 944          | 0.25         |
| 51,224       | Illumina   | 10,206       | 2.72         |
| 187,809      | Incyte   | 10,920       | 2.91         |
| 301,861      | Insmed   | 5,603        | 1.49         |
| 88,867       | Ionis Pharmaceuticals                                    | 3,634        | 0.97         |
| 254,211      | Kura Oncology  | 2,364        | 0.63         |
| 27,016       | Mirati Therapeutics                                      | 1,750        | 0.47         |
| 156,654      | Mirum Pharmaceuticals                                    | 1,884        | 0.50         |
| 30,571       | Molecular Templates                                      | 367          | 0.10         |
| 319,305      | Momenta Pharmaceuticals                                  | 6,954        | 1.85         |
| 45,009       | MyoKardia  | 2,120        | 0.56         |
| 815,566      | Ovid Therapeutics  | 1,953        | 0.52         |



# **Portfolio Statement (Continued)**

| Holding            |  | Market value | Total net  |
|--------------------|--|--------------|------------|
| -                  |  | £'000        | assets (%) |
| 101,481            | Principia Biopharma                          | 4,913        | 1.31       |
| 75,425             | Regeneron Pharmaceuticals                    | 24,924       | 6.63       |
| 203,389            | Rocket Pharmaceuticals                       | 2,906        | 0.77       |
| 44,372             | Sage Therapeutics                            | 1,770        | 0.47       |
| 58,549             | Sarepta Therapeutics                         | 4,813        | 1.28       |
| 740,628            | Savara                                       | 1,188        | 0.32       |
| 152,869            | Seattle Genetics                             | 12,692       | 3.38       |
| 399,947            | Stemline Therapeutics                        | 1,777        | 0.47       |
| 141,500            | Turning Point Therapeutics                   | 5,554        | 1.48       |
| 191,431            | Ultragenyx Pharmaceutical                    | 7,806        | 2.08       |
| 96,359             | Vertex Pharmaceuticals                       | 16,504       | 4.39       |
| 59,356             | X4 Pharmaceuticals                           | 485          | 0.13       |
| 212,585            | Y-mAbs Therapeutics                          | 4,608        | 1.23       |
|                    |  | 305,845      | 81.40      |
|                    | UNITED KINGDOM: 1.82%<br>(31/08/2019: 1.43%) |              |            |
| 270,115            | Amarin ADR                                   | 3,039        | 0.81       |
| 47,146             | GW Pharmaceuticals ADR                       | 3,779        | 1.01       |
|                    |  | 6,818        | 1.82       |
| Investments as sho | wn in the balance sheet                      | 361,992      | 96.33      |
| Net current assets |  | 13,778       | 3.67       |
| Total net assets   |  | 375,770      | 100.00     |

Stocks shown as ADR's represent American Depositary Receipts.



# **Statement of Total Return**

#### For the six months ended 29 February

|  |         |         | 2019    |          |
|--|---------|---------|---------|----------|
|  | £'000   | £'000   | £'000   | £'000    |
| Income                                 |         |         |         |          |
| Net capital gains/(losses)             |         | 15,861  |         | (37,640) |
| Revenue                                | 1,201   |         | 898     |          |
| Expenses                               | (2,095) |         | (2,657) |          |
| Interest payable and similar charges   | -       |         | -       |          |
| Net expense before taxation            | (894)   |         | (1,759) |          |
| Taxation                               | (170)   |         | (125)   |          |
| Net expense after taxation             |         | (1,064) |         | (1,884)  |
| Total return before equalisation       |         | 14,797  |         | (39,524) |
| Equalisation                           |         | 40      |         | 32       |
| Change in net assets attributable to   |         |         |         |          |
| unitholders from investment activities |         | 14,837  |         | (39,492) |

# Statement of Change in Net Assets Attributable to Unitholders

#### For the six months ended 29 February

|  | 2020     |          | 2019     |          |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|  | £'000    | £'000    | £'000    | £'000    |
| Opening net assets attributable to unitholders   |          | 397,956  |          | 545,156  |
| Amounts receivable on creation of units          | 8,817    |          | 31,186   |          |
| Amounts payable on cancellation of units         | (45,840) |          | (49,106) |          |
|  |          | (37,023) |          | (17,920) |
| Change in net assets attributable to unitholders |          |          |          |          |
| from investment activities                       |          | 14,837   |          | (39,492) |
| Closing net assets attributable to unitholders   |          | 375,770  |          | 487,744  |

The above statement shows the comparative closing net assets at 28 February 2019 whereas the current accounting period commenced 1 September 2019.



# **Balance Sheet**

#### As at

|  | 29 February 2020 | 31 August 2019  |  |
|--|------------------|-----------------|--|
|  | £'000            | £'000           |  |
| ASSETS                                 |                  |                 |  |
| Fixed assets                           |                  |                 |  |
| Investments                            | 361,992          | 390,953         |  |
| Current assets                         |                  |                 |  |
| Debtors                                | 3,966            | 5,626           |  |
| Cash and bank balances                 | 18,288           | 5,034           |  |
| Total assets                           | 384,246          | 401,613         |  |
| LIABILITIES                            |                  |                 |  |
| Creditors                              |                  |                 |  |
| Other creditors                        | 8,476            | 3,657           |  |
| Total liabilities                      | 8,476            | 3,657           |  |
| Net assets attributable to unitholders | 375,770          | 375,770 397,956 |  |



# Notes to the Financial Statements

#### Accounting policies

The Financial Statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis, as modified by the revaluation of investments, and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 ("FRS 102") and the Statement of Recommended Practice for Authorised Funds issued by the Investment Management Association ("IMA") in May 2014, and amended in June 2017. The Financial Statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Financial Statements are prepared in accordance with the Trust Deed and the Financial Conduct Authority's Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook ("COLL").

The accounting policies applied are consistent with those of the annual financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2019 and are described in those annual financial statements.



#### DIRECTORS' APPROVAL

In accordance with the requirements of the Financial Conduct Authority's Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook ("COLL"), the contents of this report have been approved on behalf of AXA Investment Managers UK Limited by:

Sh Staiel

Philippe Le Barrois d'Orgeval Director 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 John Stainsby Director 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020



# **Further Information**

#### THE SECURITIES FINANCING TRANSACTIONS REGULATION

The Securities Financing Transactions Regulation, as published by the European Securities and Markets Authority, aims to improve the transparency of the securities financing markets. Disclosures regarding exposure to Securities Financing Transactions (SFTs) or total return swaps will be required on all reports & accounts published after 13 January 2017. During the period to 29 February 2020 and at the balance sheet date, the Fund did not use SFTs or total return swaps, as such no disclosure is required.



### Directory

#### The Manager

AXA Investment Managers UK Limited 7 Newgate Street London, EC1A 7NX

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered in England and Wales No. 01431068. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of AXA S.A., incorporated in France. Member of the IA.

#### The Administrator and address for inspection of Register:

SS&C Financial Services International Limited and SS&C Financial Services Europe Limited SS&C House St Nicholas Lane Basildon Essex, SS15 5FS Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

#### Trustee

NatWest Trustee and Depositary Services Limited Trustee and Depositary Services 2nd Floor Drummond House 1 Redheughs Avenue Edinburgh EH12 9RH Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

#### Fund Accounting Administrator

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#### Legal advisers

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#### Auditor

Ernst & Young LLP 144 Morrison Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EX

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