

**Annual Long Report and Audited Financial Statements**  
**Year ended**  
**15 February 2023**

# **AXA Framlington Japan Fund**



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

## **Contents Page**

Fund Objective & Investment Policy*	3
Investment Review*	4
Portfolio Changes*	6
Managing Risks*	7
Fund Information	10
Comparative Tables	12
Portfolio Statement*	16
Statement of Total Return	22
Statement of Change in Net Assets Attributable to Unitholders	22
Balance Sheet	23
Notes to the Financial Statements	24
Distribution Tables	32
Statement of Manager's Responsibilities	34
Report of the Trustee	35
Report of the Independent Auditor	36
Further Information (Unaudited)*	39
Directory*	41

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

More detailed information about AXA Investment Managers' UK funds is available on the Fund Centre of our website where you can find the Prospectus, Key Investor Information Document (KIID), annual reports and monthly fund factsheets at <https://retail.axa-im.co.uk/fund-centre>.

## **Fund Objective & Investment Policy**

The aim of this Fund is to provide long-term capital growth over a period of 5 years or more.

The Fund invests in shares of Japanese listed companies which the Manager believes will provide above-average returns. The Fund invests in companies of any size. 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 FTSE Japan index. The FTSE Japan index is designed to measure the performance of large and medium-sized companies in Japan. This index best represents a core component of the Managers' investment universe.

This Fund is actively managed in reference to the FTSE Japan index, which may be used by investors to compare the Fund's performance.

## Investment Review

### Performance

This has been a difficult year for the fund. The market has been weak and the fund succumbed to profit taking across a number of core holdings. The result is that performance lagged the benchmark by a significant margin. We would agree with the consensus that rising inflation has impacted stocks that trade at premium valuations. Given the underlying growth style in the fund, it is somewhat expected that our positions suffered a derating. What was less predictable was the extreme volatility and extent of that selling pressure across many growth names. Markets globally are increasingly correlated with comments coming from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, and the relief rally in the latter stages of the period coincided with the view that the US rate tightening cycle may be ending. Given that inflation remains elevated, we think it somewhat premature to predict a return to ultra-loose monetary policy in the US, even if rate increases see a pause. However, the long-term ethos of the fund remains to focus on smaller cap companies with strong growth outlooks. This has not changed under the changing macro-economic landscape.

Japan, like everywhere, has been impacted by the Ukraine conflict. Relatively speaking, Japan is less exposed to Russian energy imports than Europe. Only 14% of their coal supply is from the region, which equates to 3% of total energy needs in Japan. What is clear though is that cost push inflation is beginning to bite in Japan just like elsewhere. Consumer confidence has remained resilient, due to in part the Japanese Government pledging to subsidise gasoline prices, and also the rebound following COVID-19. While Governor Kuroda remains in office, we do not anticipate any change to monetary policy in Japan. The Bank of Japan sees inflation as transient and will wait for wage growth to become entrenched before changing its stance. However, the labour market in Japan is tight and skills shortages are rife. It is conceivable that Kuroda's successor who will succeed as Governor next spring, will see policy differently. Until that happens, we expect the current trend of a weaker Yen to continue.

### Portfolio Activity

We decided to exit Rakuten on the basis that it will take longer to turn their mobile business profitable than originally assumed. This creates a higher risk of dilution and near term the stock is dead money at best. The company has been burning through its cash pile and the IPO of its financial business has been delayed by the market turmoil.

We made a new acquisition in Japanese electronic parts and battery maker TDK. TDK is a major player in batteries for portable electronics but is now rapidly expanding into other battery markets. Batteries for e-bikes, e-scooters, energy storage systems and solid-state battery development are going to be a new leg for the top line. They are also a leading player in passive components with strength in components for autos. Here they see the shift to electric vehicles tripling demand for their mainstay market in ceramic capacitors.

Lastly, we have switched into the global number two maker of mining and construction equipment, Komatsu. This is a way to increase the weighting to the buoyant commodity space which is not well represented in the holdings. Komatsu has a dominant position in mining equipment in Asia and Australasia. They have been more exposed to both thermal and coking coal but we are encouraged that recently there is a clear shift towards more environmentally friendly minerals. This is symbolic of the global move into electric vehicles. It is also good news for profitability at Komatsu as the super-sized dump trucks for open cast copper mining are very high margin products. The growth in copper related demand should more than offset the fall in coal facing equipment according to management. This is good news for profits and attracts us from an ESG perspective. It is also apparent that the last peak in the mining cycle was approximately a decade ago. As the normal replacement cycle for mining equipment is about ten years, there should be a supportive level of

### Top Ten Holdings

as at 15 February 2023

	%
<b>Toyota Motor</b>	<b>3.07</b>
<i>Consumer Discretionary</i>	
<b>Mitsubishi UFJ Financial</b>	<b>2.20</b>
<i>Financials</i>	
<b>Hitachi</b>	<b>1.66</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	
<b>Sony</b>	<b>1.64</b>
<i>Consumer Discretionary</i>	
<b>Mitsui</b>	<b>1.62</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	
<b>Toyota Industries</b>	<b>1.61</b>
<i>Consumer Discretionary</i>	
<b>AGC</b>	<b>1.56</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	
<b>FANUC</b>	<b>1.53</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	
<b>Fuji Electric</b>	<b>1.44</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	
<b>Horiba</b>	<b>1.44</b>
<i>Industrials</i>	

## Investment Review (Continued)

demand from customers wanting to upgrade aging fleets. The funding was made by top slicing some good performers in the large cap names and exiting JFE steel. JFE has been a reasonable performer, but we are concerned that the demand situation in China is uncertain.

### Outlook

We had a positive discussion recently with one of our key strategists, Musha san. He has been covering Japan for over 40 years, and sees that the ongoing weakness in the Yen as being very positive long term for Japan. Many commentators have suggested that the weaker currency is importing inflation into Japan, but Musha san argues that Japan will see a “J Curve” effect with a half year lag. The strong sensitivity to the weaker Yen for corporate profits should create an economic boom, and as such should be extremely beneficial to Japan within the coming twelve months. Also, the added competitive advantage to manufacturers exporting from Japan with the Yen benefit should see onshoring. This is important from a geo-political standpoint as Japan is a key strategic partner for the United States, Taiwan, Korea and Southeast Asia. Given the ongoing concerns with China and Russia, Japan can be seen to benefit herself, and her allies, by becoming stronger economically.

Lastly, we must mention the tragic news of the assassination of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. There is no sign that this was anything other than the act of a lone person with an apparent vendetta against Abe san. It seems that Abe had links to a religious group that had extorted money from the assassin’s mother. The initial impact on Japan was of intense shock, especially as Abe had done so much for the country over the last decade. His successor Kishida san expressed his deep remorse at the news and pledged to continue Abe’s good works. Unfortunately, it has become apparent that several other politicians in the ruling LDP have links to the same religious organisation. As a result, Kishida’s approval rating has collapsed in the last few weeks. It remains to be seen what long-term damage this will do to the LDP and Japanese policy making.

### Chisako Hardie

Source of all performance data: AXA Investment Managers, Morningstar to 15 February 2023.

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

## Portfolio Changes

For the year ended 15 February 2023

Major Purchases	Cost (£'000)	Major Sales	Proceeds (£'000)
Kawasaki Heavy Industries	1,287	Toyota Motor	3,485
SHIFT	1,163	Sompo	2,579
FANUC	1,062	Mitsubishi UFJ Financial	2,310
Toray Industries	879	Mitsubishi Chemical	2,008
Omron	798	Taiyo Yuden	1,810
Media Do	797	JFE	1,700
Shionogi	787	Shiongi	1,628
NET One Systems	739	Hitachi	1,570
Topcon	572	Daiichi Sankyo	1,491
Change	355	Kureha	1,440
Other purchases	3,631	Other sales	51,282
<b>Total purchases for the year</b>	<b>12,070</b>	<b>Total sales for the year</b>	<b>71,303</b>

## 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 paragraphs explain the Manager's approach to managing those risks.

### RISK PROFILE

The Fund ordinarily invests at least 80% of the Fund's investment in Japan, but also has the power to invest in other areas of the Far East. Consequently, changes in exchange rates will affect the value of investments overseas.

As the Fund mainly invests in a single country it has the potential to be more volatile than the Fund which invests in a more diversified portfolio of equities across a range of countries. 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 the 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.

## STOCK LENDING

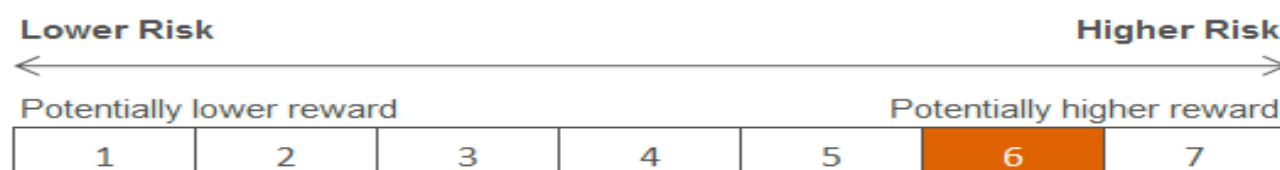
The Fund may participate in a stock lending programme managed by an affiliate of the Manager (acting as stock lending agent) for the purpose of lending the Fund's securities via entering into a stock lending authorisation agreement. If the Fund engages in stock lending it will be exposed to counterparty credit risk in that the borrower may default on a loan, become insolvent or otherwise be unable to meet, or refuse to honour, its obligations to return loaned or equivalent securities. In this event, the relevant Fund could experience delays in recovering the loaned securities, may not be able to recover the loaned securities and may incur a capital loss which might result in a reduction in the net asset value of the relevant Fund. the Fund's exposure to its counterparty will be mitigated by the fact that the counterparty will be requested to post collateral, in the form of cash or debt or equity securities, as from time to time set out in the relevant stock lending agreement, and will forfeit its collateral if it defaults on the transaction. If a counterparty defaults and fails to return equivalent securities to those loaned, the Fund may suffer a loss equal to any shortfall between the value of the realised collateral and the market value of the replacement securities. Such collateral shortfall may arise as a result of inaccurate pricing of the collateral, unfavourable market movements in the value of the collateral, or a lack of liquidity in the market on which the collateral is traded. If the relevant transaction with a counterparty is not fully collateralised, then the Fund's credit exposure to the counterparty in such circumstances will be higher than if the transaction had been fully collateralised. When entering into stock lending the Fund may also be exposed to settlement risk (i.e. the possibility that one or more parties to the transactions will fail to deliver the assets at agreed-upon time) and legal risk, which is the risk of loss due to the unexpected application of a law or regulation, or because a court declares a contract not legally



enforceable. In addition to the specific risks identified above stock lending carry other risks, as described in this Risk Factors section, notably (i) counterparty risk, ii) custody insolvency and iii) liquidity risk.

For Stock Lending the risks are partially mitigated by: (i) the lending agent seeking to lend only to counterparties who are considered to have a strong financial standing; (ii) the requirement to receive collateral of good quality and liquidity (the anticipated ability to sell the collateral if needed) covering the value of assets lent, and this amount being regularly reviewed to reflect any market movement in the value of assets lent and received; (iii) carrying out the transaction under legal documentation corresponding to recognised market standards; (iv) limiting the amount of lending to individual counterparties; (v) ensuring the terms of the loan allow it to be requested to be recalled at any time.

## RISK AND REWARD PROFILE



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.

Monthly monitoring is conducted, using an in-house 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 15 February 2023, the price of Z Accumulation units, with net income reinvested, rose by +4.15%. The FTSE Japan Index (Total Return) increased by +22.69% over the same time period. During the same period, the price of Z Income units, with zero income reinvested, rose by +1.26%. (Source: AXA Investment Managers and Morningstar) (Prices in GBP).

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

Date	AXA Framlington Japan Z Acc	FTSE Japan (TR)
15 Feb 2018 - 15 Feb 2019	-5.29%	-0.90%
15 Feb 2019 - 15 Feb 2020	+9.16%	+10.52%
15 Feb 2020 - 15 Feb 2021	+21.17%	+16.10%
15 Feb 2021 - 15 Feb 2022	-12.18%	-6.41%
15 Feb 2022 - 15 Feb 2023	-5.33%	+3.09%

Source: AXA Investment Managers & Morningstar. Basis: single price basis (NAV) with net income reinvested for Accumulation units, net of fees in GBP.

This Fund is actively managed in reference to the FTSE Japan index, which may be used by investors to compare the Fund's performance.

Past performance is not a guide to future performance.

### YIELD

A Acc	1.21%
D Inc*	0.60%
D Acc*	0.60%
R Inc	0.32%
R Acc	0.32%
Z Inc	1.06%
Z Acc	1.06%

### CHARGES

	Initial Charge	Annual Management Charge
A**	Nil	0.60%
D*	Nil	1.10%
R	Nil	1.50%
Z	Nil	0.75%

\*\*Units in Class A are only available at the Manager's discretion by contractual agreement.

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

A Acc	0.70%
D Inc*	1.21%
D Acc*	1.21%
R Inc	1.60%
R Acc	1.60%
Z Inc	0.85%
Z Acc	0.85%

\*D unit class launched on 25 May 2022.

\*\*\*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 Japan Fund is available as a Stocks and Shares ISA through the AXA Investment Managers Stocks and Shares ISA.

## Comparative Tables

	A Acc		
Change in net assets per unit	15/02/2023 (p)	15/02/2022 (p)	15/02/2021 (p)
Opening net asset value per unit <sup>†</sup>	204.60	232.66	191.74
Return before operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(9.22)	(26.49)	42.30
Operating charges	(1.36)	(1.57)	(1.38)
Return after operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(10.58)	(28.06)	40.92
Distributions	(2.35)	(1.44)	(1.33)
Retained distributions on accumulation units	2.35	1.44	1.33
<b>Closing net asset value per unit<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>194.02</b>	<b>204.60</b>	<b>232.66</b>
 * <sup>^</sup> after direct transaction costs of:	 0.06	 0.05	 0.09
<b>Performance</b>			
Return after charges	-5.17%	-12.06%	21.34%
<b>Other Information</b>			
Closing net asset value <sup>†</sup> (£'000)	1,605	3,252	3,937
Closing number of units	827,232	1,589,552	1,692,065
Operating charges	0.70%	0.69%	0.70%
Direct transaction costs <sup>*</sup>	0.03%	0.02%	0.04%
<b>Prices</b>			
Highest unit price #	207.60	249.70	236.40
Lowest unit price #	174.40	198.20	139.20

## Comparative Tables (Continued)

	D Acc~ 15/02/2023 (p)	D Inc~ 15/02/2023 (p)
<b>Change in net assets per unit</b>		
Opening net asset value per unit <sup>†</sup>	582.50	571.20
Return before operating charges <sup>^</sup>	13.86	13.59
Operating charges	(5.14)	(5.04)
Return after operating charges <sup>^</sup>	8.72	8.55
Distributions	(3.57)	(3.50)
Retained distributions on accumulation units	3.57	-
<b>Closing net asset value per unit<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>591.22</b>	<b>576.25</b>
 * <sup>^</sup> after direct transaction costs of:	 0.17	 0.17
<b>Performance</b>		
Return after charges	1.50%	1.50%
<b>Other Information</b>		
Closing net asset value <sup>†</sup> (£'000)	4,862	835
Closing number of units	822,300	144,865
Operating charges	1.21%	1.21%
Direct transaction costs*	0.03%	0.03%
<b>Prices</b>		
Highest unit price #	618.10	606.10
Lowest unit price #	533.30	522.90

## Comparative Tables (Continued)

Change in net assets per unit	R Acc			R Inc		
	15/02/2023 (p)	15/02/2022 (p)	15/02/2021 (p)	15/02/2023 (p)	15/02/2022 (p)	15/02/2021 (p)
Opening net asset value per unit <sup>†</sup>	627.22	719.65	598.47	615.03	705.67	586.84
Return before operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(28.28)	(81.32)	131.03	(27.74)	(79.76)	128.51
Operating charges	(9.42)	(11.11)	(9.85)	(9.25)	(10.88)	(9.68)
Return after operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(37.70)	(92.43)	121.18	(36.99)	(90.64)	118.83
Distributions	(1.89)	-	-	(1.85)	-	-
Retained distributions on accumulation units	1.89	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Closing net asset value per unit<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>589.52</b>	<b>627.22</b>	<b>719.65</b>	<b>576.19</b>	<b>615.03</b>	<b>705.67</b>
 * <sup>^</sup> after direct transaction costs of:	 0.17	 0.15	 0.28	 0.17	 0.15	 0.27
<b>Performance</b>						
Return after charges	-6.01%	-12.84%	20.25%	-6.01%	-12.84%	20.25%
<b>Other Information</b>						
Closing net asset value <sup>†</sup> (£'000)	7,240	15,471	21,719	692	1,749	2,092
Closing number of units	1,228,106	2,466,622	3,017,978	120,173	284,357	296,511
Operating charges	1.60%	1.59%	1.60%	1.60%	1.59%	1.60%
Direct transaction costs <sup>*</sup>	0.03%	0.02%	0.04%	0.03%	0.02%	0.04%
<b>Prices</b>						
Highest unit price #	636.20	768.40	731.60	623.90	753.50	717.30
Lowest unit price #	533.10	607.80	434.20	522.80	596.00	425.70

## Comparative Tables (Continued)

Change in net assets per unit	Z Acc			Z Inc		
	15/02/2023 (p)	15/02/2022 (p)	15/02/2021 (p)	15/02/2023 (p)	15/02/2022 (p)	15/02/2021 (p)
Opening net asset value per unit <sup>†</sup>	288.67	328.74	271.33	195.50	223.84	185.59
Return before operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(13.00)	(37.38)	59.77	(8.79)	(25.45)	40.86
Operating charges	(2.32)	(2.69)	(2.36)	(1.57)	(1.83)	(1.62)
Return after operating charges <sup>^</sup>	(15.32)	(40.07)	57.41	(10.36)	(27.28)	39.24
Distributions	(2.90)	(1.56)	(1.45)	(1.97)	(1.06)	(0.99)
Retained distributions on accumulation units	2.90	1.56	1.45	-	-	-
<b>Closing net asset value per unit<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>273.35</b>	<b>288.67</b>	<b>328.74</b>	<b>183.17</b>	<b>195.50</b>	<b>223.84</b>
 * <sup>^</sup> after direct transaction costs of:	 0.08	 0.07	 0.13	 0.05	 0.05	 0.09
<b>Performance</b>						
Return after charges	-5.31%	-12.19%	21.16%	-5.30%	-12.19%	21.14%
<b>Other Information</b>						
Closing net asset value <sup>†</sup> (£'000)	52,576	113,741	137,177	5,647	10,342	12,393
Closing number of units	19,233,598	39,402,019	41,728,492	3,083,082	5,289,880	5,536,471
Operating charges	0.85%	0.84%	0.85%	0.85%	0.84%	0.85%
Direct transaction costs <sup>*</sup>	0.03%	0.02%	0.04%	0.03%	0.02%	0.04%
<b>Prices</b>						
Highest unit price #	292.90	352.50	334.00	198.40	240.00	228.50
Lowest unit price #	246.00	279.60	197.00	166.60	190.40	134.70

<sup>†</sup> Valued at bid-market prices.

# High and low price disclosures are based on quoted unit prices. Therefore the opening and closing NAV prices may fall outside the high / low price threshold.

<sup>^</sup> Operating charges include indirect costs incurred in the maintenance and running of the Fund, as disclosed in the detailed expenses within the Statement of Total Return.

\* Direct transaction costs include fees, commissions, transfer taxes and duties in the purchasing and selling of investments, within the accounting year.

The figures used within the table have been calculated against the average Net Asset Value for the accounting year.

~ D unit class launched on 25 May 2022.

## Portfolio Statement

The AXA Framlington Japan Fund portfolio as at 15 February 2023 consisted of the following investments, which are ordinary shares unless otherwise stated.

Holding	Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
<b>BASIC MATERIALS: 7.12%</b> (15/02/2022: 11.06%)		
<b>Chemicals: 6.16%</b> (15/02/2022: 8.44%)		
50,100 MEC	696	0.95
66,100 Showa Denko	901	1.23
68,100 Taiyo	996	1.36
199,800 Toray Industries	960	1.31
150,200 Toyobo	960	1.31
	<b>4,513</b>	<b>6.16</b>
<b>Industrial Materials: 0.96%</b> (15/02/2022: 1.32%)		
45,900 Seiren	707	0.96
	<b>707</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>Industrial Metals &amp; Mining: 0.00%</b> (15/02/2022: 1.30%)		
<b>CONSUMER DISCRETIONARY: 16.60%</b> (15/02/2022: 16.15%)		
<b>Automobiles &amp; Parts: 7.05%</b> (15/02/2022: 8.05%)		
22,200 Denso	1,011	1.38
52,600 Koito Manufacturing	729	0.99
24,700 Toyota Industries	1,185	1.61
193,800 Toyota Motor	2,253	3.07
	<b>5,178</b>	<b>7.05</b>
<b>Leisure Goods: 3.68%</b> (15/02/2022: 2.38%)		
21,800 Nintendo	722	0.98
16,600 Sony	1,207	1.64
25,300 Yamaha	781	1.06
	<b>2,710</b>	<b>3.68</b>



## Portfolio Statement (Continued)

Holding		Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
<b>Media: 4.80%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 4.56%)</b>			
33,100	Dentsu	855	1.16
47,700	Kadokawa	791	1.08
31,700	Media Do	304	0.41
288,400	Septeni	602	0.82
126,400	Vector	980	1.33
		<b>3,532</b>	<b>4.80</b>
<b>Retailers: 1.07%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 1.16%)</b>			
47,600	Komeri	784	1.07
		<b>784</b>	<b>1.07</b>
<b>CONSUMER STAPLES: 1.28%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 1.23%)</b>			
<b>Personal Care, Drug &amp; Grocery: 1.28%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 1.23%)</b>			
14,600	Kao	463	0.63
36,100	Pigeon	474	0.65
		<b>937</b>	<b>1.28</b>
<b>ENERGY: 0.99%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 0.79%)</b>			
<b>Alternative Energy: 0.99%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 0.79%)</b>			
59,100	eRex	726	0.99
		<b>726</b>	<b>0.99</b>
<b>FINANCIALS: 6.59%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 7.32%)</b>			
<b>Banks: 2.20%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 2.37%)</b>			
265,200	Mitsubishi UFJ Financial	1,617	2.20
		<b>1,617</b>	<b>2.20</b>
<b>Investment Banking &amp; Brokerage: 2.65%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 2.06%)</b>			
52,900	Nihon M&A Center	400	0.54
50,400	Orix	738	1.00
46,800	SBI	813	1.11
		<b>1,951</b>	<b>2.65</b>

## Portfolio Statement (Continued)

Holding		Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
<b>Non-Life Insurance: 1.74%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 2.89%)</b>			
186,200	Anicom	627	0.85
19,000	Sompo	655	0.89
		<b>1,282</b>	<b>1.74</b>
<b>HEALTH CARE: 9.02%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 9.21%)</b>			
<b>Health Care Providers: 0.59%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 0.56%)</b>			
19,900	M3	431	0.59
		<b>431</b>	<b>0.59</b>
<b>Medical Equipment &amp; Services: 4.04%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 4.09%)</b>			
50,800	Asahi Intecc	737	1.00
367,700	CYBERDYNE	674	0.92
12,900	Sysmex	681	0.93
37,100	Terumo	875	1.19
		<b>2,967</b>	<b>4.04</b>
<b>Pharmaceuticals &amp; Biotechnology: 4.39%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 4.56%)</b>			
32,000	Daiichi Sankyo	831	1.13
16,100	Eisai	748	1.02
126,500	HEALIOS	252	0.34
35,800	PeptiDream	418	0.57
64,600	Sosei	974	1.33
		<b>3,223</b>	<b>4.39</b>
<b>INDUSTRIALS: 32.00%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 25.76%)</b>			
<b>Construction &amp; Materials: 2.36%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 1.95%)</b>			
6,400	Daikin Industries	918	1.25
55,000	EXEO	813	1.11
		<b>1,731</b>	<b>2.36</b>

## Portfolio Statement (Continued)

Holding		Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
<b>Electronic &amp; Electrical Equipment: 7.42%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 6.83%)</b>			
32,700	Fuji Electric	1,061	1.44
28,400	Hitachi	1,223	1.66
25,400	Horiba	1,056	1.44
2,200	Keyence	813	1.11
79,400	Topcon	819	1.11
185,600	Yamashin-Filter	486	0.66
		<b>5,458</b>	<b>7.42</b>
<b>General Industrials: 3.88%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 3.19%)</b>			
37,500	AGC	1,145	1.56
14,700	Kureha	743	1.01
101,700	Mitsubishi Electric	960	1.31
		<b>2,848</b>	<b>3.88</b>
<b>Industrial Engineering: 7.90%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 6.68%)</b>			
78,700	CKD	990	1.35
73,300	DMG Mori	958	1.30
7,900	FANUC	1,123	1.53
52,600	Komatsu	1,055	1.44
66,600	Kubota	837	1.14
60,300	Trusco Nakayama	835	1.14
		<b>5,798</b>	<b>7.90</b>
<b>Industrial Support Services: 5.84%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 3.96%)</b>			
22,700	JMDC	609	0.83
48,700	Mitsui	1,189	1.62
36,100	Recruit	894	1.22
16,300	Secom	798	1.09
52,800	UT	793	1.08
		<b>4,283</b>	<b>5.84</b>
<b>Industrial Transportation: 4.05%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 3.15%)</b>			
53,000	Kawasaki Heavy Industries	995	1.35
22,100	NIPPON EXPRESS	1,007	1.37
31,700	Sankyu	977	1.33
		<b>2,979</b>	<b>4.05</b>
<b>Technology Hardware &amp; Equipment: 0.55%</b> <b>(15/02/2022: 0.00%)</b>			
9,400	Nidec	407	0.55
		<b>407</b>	<b>0.55</b>

## Portfolio Statement (Continued)

Holding		Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
REAL ESTATE: 1.03% (15/02/2022: 0.94%)			
Real Estate Investment & Services: 1.03% (15/02/2022: 0.94%)			
113,900	Hulic	760	1.03
		<b>760</b>	<b>1.03</b>
TECHNOLOGY: 22.36% (15/02/2022: 23.11%)			
Software & Computer Services: 10.03% (15/02/2022: 8.78%)			
16,900	Bengo4.com	288	0.39
54,600	Change	862	1.17
199,300	Infomart	429	0.58
62,800	Internet Initiative Japan	1,012	1.38
39,800	Itochu Techno-Solutions	767	1.04
22,700	Makuake	198	0.27
48,500	NET One Systems	983	1.34
24,400	Nomura Research Institute	456	0.62
36,600	NS Solutions	770	1.05
5,700	SHIFT	814	1.11
37,100	TIS	795	1.08
		<b>7,374</b>	<b>10.03</b>
Technology Hardware & Equipment: 12.33% (15/02/2022: 14.33%)			
43,300	Dexerials	744	1.01
25,700	FUJIFILM	1,034	1.41
7,000	Fujitsu	776	1.06
28,300	Ibiden	811	1.10
34,000	Kaga Electronics	944	1.29
4,200	Lasertec	591	0.80
16,900	Omron	776	1.06
36,000	RS Technologies	799	1.09
43,100	Sumco	514	0.70
28,800	TDK	815	1.11
2,700	Tokyo Electron	780	1.06
113,900	Wacom	473	0.64
		<b>9,057</b>	<b>12.33</b>

## Portfolio Statement (Continued)

Holding	Market value £'000	Total net assets (%)
TELECOMMUNICATIONS: 1.50% (15/02/2022: 1.83%)		
Telecommunications Equipment: 0.87% (15/02/2022: 0.75%)		
81,600 Anritsu	635	0.87
	<b>635</b>	<b>0.87</b>
Telecommunications Service Providers: 0.63% (15/02/2022: 1.08%)		
12,800 SoftBank	460	0.63
	<b>460</b>	<b>0.63</b>
UTILITIES: 1.31% (15/02/2022: 1.13%)		
Gas, Water & Multiutilities: 1.31% (15/02/2022: 1.13%)		
28,000 Iwatani	964	1.31
	<b>964</b>	<b>1.31</b>
Investments as shown in the balance sheet	73,312	99.80
Net current assets	145	0.20
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>73,457</b>	<b>100.00</b>

All investments held are listed, unless otherwise stated.

## Statement of Total Return

For the year ended 15 February

	Notes	£'000	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000
Income					
Net capital losses	3		(9,920)		(20,750)
Revenue	4	2,237		2,558	
Expenses	5	(907)		(1,562)	
Interest payable and similar charges		-		-	
Net revenue before taxation		1,330		996	
Taxation	6	(231)		(310)	
Net revenue after taxation			1,099		686
<b>Total return before distributions</b>			<b>(8,821)</b>		<b>(20,064)</b>
Distributions	7		(1,099)		(735)
<b>Change in net assets attributable to unitholders from investment activities</b>			<b>(9,920)</b>		<b>(20,799)</b>

## Statement of Change in Net Assets Attributable to Unitholders

For the year ended 15 February

	£'000	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000
Opening net assets attributable to unitholders		144,555		177,318
In Specie transfer*	1,892		-	
Amounts receivable on creation of units	5,538		29,255	
Amounts payable on cancellation of units	(69,238)		(41,856)	
		(61,808)		(12,601)
Change in net assets attributable to unitholders from investment activities		(9,920)		(20,799)
Retained distribution on accumulation units		630		637
<b>Closing net assets attributable to unitholders</b>		<b>73,457</b>		<b>144,555</b>

\*In Specie transfer from AXA Rosenberg Japan Fund on 29 July 2022.

## Balance Sheet

As at 15 February

		2023 £'000	2022 £'000
	Notes		
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Fixed assets			
Investments		73,312	142,423
Current assets			
Debtors	8	1,190	1,587
Cash and bank balances	9	453	2,218
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>74,955</b>	<b>146,228</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors			
Distribution payable		68	56
Other creditors	10	1,430	1,617
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,673</b>
<b>Net assets attributable to unitholders</b>		<b>73,457</b>	<b>144,555</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### 1.1 Accounting policies

a) 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").

There are no material events that have been identified that may cast significant doubt about the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern for the next twelve months from the date these financial statements are authorised for issue. The Manager believes that the Fund has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and, following consideration of the impact of COVID-19, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

b) Dividends on quoted ordinary shares and preference shares are recognised when the securities are quoted ex-dividend. Where such securities are not quoted, dividends are recognised when the right to receive payment is established.

c) The listed investments of the Fund are valued at bid-market prices ruling at 12 noon on the last business day of the accounting year. Where certain securities are listed on global markets which are closed at the 12 noon valuation point, the last available closing bid-price will be utilised, subject to the application of any fair value pricing adjustment. The fair value of unlisted securities, and unquoted securities where the quotation has been suspended, is estimated by the Manager, using independent sources where available.

d) The functional currency of the Fund is Sterling (GBP). Any transactions in overseas currencies are translated to Sterling at the rates of exchange ruling on the day of any such transaction. Foreign currency balances and investments priced in overseas currencies at the end of the year are converted into Sterling at the exchange rates ruling at 12 noon on the last business day of the accounting year.

e) All expenses are charged in full against revenue on an accruals basis, with the exception of transaction charges which are charged directly to capital. The Manager is entitled to receive (with effect from the dealing day on which units of any class are first allotted) an annual management charge payable on and out of the scheme property of each unit class of the Fund. The annual management charge will be based on the value of the scheme property of the Fund on the immediately preceding dealing day as determined in accordance with the Trust Deed and the Regulations for the purpose of calculating the price of units.

f) Corporation Tax is provided at 20% on revenue, after deduction of expenses. Overseas dividends are disclosed gross of any foreign tax suffered, the tax element being disclosed in the tax note. Where overseas tax has been deducted from overseas revenue, that tax can, in some cases, be set off against Corporation Tax payable, by way of double taxation relief. Deferred taxation is provided on a full provision basis on timing differences arising from the different treatment of items for accounting and tax purposes. Potential future liabilities and assets are recognised where the transactions or events giving rise to them occurred before the balance sheet date. A deferred tax asset is only recognised to the extent that a timing difference will be of future benefit.

g) Bank interest is accounted for on an accruals basis.



## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

h) Revenue equalisation currently applies to the Fund, with the result that part of the purchase price of a unit reflects the relevant share of accrued revenue received or to be received by the Fund. This sum is returned to a unitholder with the first allocation of revenue in respect of a unit issued during a distribution period. The amount representing the revenue equalisation in the unit's price is a return of capital and is not taxable in the hands of the unitholder. The amount of revenue equalisation is calculated by dividing the aggregate of the amounts of revenue included in the price of units issued or sold to unitholders in an annual or interim distribution period by the number of those units and applying the resultant average to each of the units in question. Equalisation on distributions received is deducted from the cost of the investment.

i) With the exception of the annual management charge, which is directly attributable to individual unit classes, all revenue and expenses are allocated to unit classes pro rata to the value of the net assets of the relevant unit class on the day the revenue or expense is recognised.

j) The Fund is not required to produce a cash flow statement as it meets the exemption criteria set out in FRS102.7.1A.

### 1.2 Distribution policy

a) The Fund will distribute any net revenue two months after the accounting year end. Any net revenue deficit will be transferred to the capital account. The type of distribution being made by the Fund is a dividend distribution.

b) Special dividends and share buybacks are treated as revenue or capital depending on the facts of each particular case. It is likely that where the receipt of a special dividend results in a significant reduction in the capital value of the holding, then the special dividend should be treated as capital in nature so as to ensure that the matching principle is applied to gains and losses. Otherwise, the special dividends should be recognised as revenue. Where special dividends are treated as revenue, they are included in the amount available for distribution. The tax accounting treatment follows the principal amount.

c) If a distribution payment of the Fund remains unclaimed for a period of 6 years after it has become due, it will be forfeited and will revert to and become part of the scheme property.

d) The annual management charge is charged against revenue for the purposes of calculating the amount available for distribution.

## 2 Financial instruments

The analysis and tables provided below refer to the narrative disclosure on financial instruments risks on pages 7 to 9 of the Manager's Report.

### Price risk sensitivity

At 15 February 2023, if the price of investments held by the Fund increased or decreased by 5%, with all other variables remaining constant, the net assets would increase or decrease by £3,665,602 (2022: £7,121,141) respectively.

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### Foreign currency risk sensitivity

Assuming all other factors remain stable, if GBP strengthens by 5% the resulting change in the net assets attributable to unitholders of the Fund would be a decrease of approximately £3,687,561 (2022: £7,199,777). A 5% weakening in GBP would have an equal but opposite effect.

### Interest rate risk sensitivity

As the majority of the Fund's financial assets are non-interest bearing, the Fund is only subject to limited exposure to fair value interest rate risk due to fluctuations in levels of market interest rates. No interest rate risk sensitivity analysis is therefore provided.

### Currency exposures

A proportion of the financial assets of the Fund are denominated in currencies other than Sterling, with the effect that the Fund's balance sheet and total return can be directly affected by currency movements.

	Monetary Exposure £'000	Non-Monetary Exposure £'000	Total £'000
<b>2023</b>			
Japanese Yen	439	73,312	73,751
<b>Total</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>73,312</b>	<b>73,751</b>

	Monetary Exposure £'000	Non-Monetary Exposure £'000	Total £'000
<b>2022</b>			
Japanese Yen	1,572	142,423	143,995
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>142,423</b>	<b>143,995</b>

## 3 Net capital losses

The net losses during the year comprise:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Losses on non-derivative securities	(9,879)	(20,676)
Losses on foreign currency exchange	(35)	(69)
Transaction charges	(6)	(5)
<b>Net capital losses</b>	<b>(9,920)</b>	<b>(20,750)</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### 4 Revenue

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Overseas dividends	2,230	2,558
Bank interest	7	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>2,237</b>	<b>2,558</b>

### 5 Expenses

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
<b>Payable to the Manager</b>		
Annual management charge	814	1,411
Registrar's fees	58	101
	<b>872</b>	<b>1,512</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>		
Audit fee	8	8
Safe custody charges	17	18
Trustee's fees	10	24
	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>1,562</b>

Expenses include irrecoverable VAT where applicable.

### 6 Taxation

#### a) Analysis of tax in the year:

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Irrecoverable overseas tax	231	310
<b>Total tax for the year (see note 6b)</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>310</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### b) Factors affecting total tax charge for the year:

The tax assessed for the year is lower than the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK for an authorised unit trust (20%) (2022: 20%).

The differences are explained below:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Net revenue before taxation	1,330	996
Corporation tax at 20%	266	199
Effects of:		
Irrecoverable overseas tax	231	310
Movement in excess management expenses	184	312
Revenue not subject to taxation	(450)	(511)
Total effects	(35)	111
<b>Total tax charge for the year (see note 6a)</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>310</b>

Authorised unit trusts are exempt from tax on capital gains.

### c) Deferred taxation:

There is no provision required for deferred taxation at the Balance sheet date (2022: nil).

### d) Factors that may affect future tax charges:

At the year end, after offset against income taxable on receipt, there is a potential deferred tax asset of £4,425,450 (2022: £4,241,940) relation to surplus management expenses. It is unlikely that the Fund will generate sufficient taxable profits in the future to utilise these amounts and therefore no deferred tax asset has been recognised.

## 7 Distributions

At year end, there was no insufficient income to meet expenses and taxation (2022: £49,814).

The distributions take account of income received on the creation of units and income deducted on the cancellation of units, and comprise:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Final	698	693
Add: Income deducted on cancellation of units	476	142
Deduct: Income received on creation of units	(75)	(100)
<b>Net distribution for the year</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>735</b>
<b>Reconciliation to net revenue after taxation:</b>		
Net distribution for the year	1,099	735
Shortfall transfer to capital	-	(49)
<b>Net expense after taxation</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>686</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### 8 Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Sales awaiting settlement	987	1,323
Amounts receivable on creation of units	3	32
Accrued revenue	193	232
Monies from AXA Rosenberg Japan Fund	7	-
<b>Total debtors</b>	<b>1,190</b>	<b>1,587</b>

### 9 Cash and bank balances

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Cash and bank balances	453	2,218
<b>Total cash and bank balances</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>2,218</b>

### 10 Other creditors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts payable on cancellation of units	541	1,399
Purchases awaiting settlement	739	-
Accrued expenses		
- Manager	84	160
- Other	66	58
<b>Total other creditors</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>1,617</b>

### 11 Unitholders' funds

The Fund currently has seven unit classes in issue.

	A Acc	D Acc*	D Inc*	R Acc	R Inc	Z Acc
Opening units in issue	1,589,552	-	-	2,466,622	284,357	39,402,019
Units issued	116,253	848,099	153,846	38,023	2,919	2,708,821
Units cancelled	(878,573)	(25,799)	(8,981)	(1,276,539)	(167,103)	(22,877,242)
Unit conversions	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Closing units in issue</b>	<b>827,232</b>	<b>822,300</b>	<b>144,865</b>	<b>1,228,106</b>	<b>120,173</b>	<b>19,233,598</b>

	Z Inc
Opening units in issue	5,289,880
Units issued	200,428
Units cancelled	(2,407,226)
Unit conversions	-
<b>Closing units in issue</b>	<b>3,083,082</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### 12 Related parties

AXA Investment Managers UK Limited acts as principal on all the transactions of units in the Fund. The aggregate monies received through creations and liquidations are disclosed in the Statement of Change in Net Assets Attributable to Unitholders and Note 7, amounts due to/from AXA Investment Managers UK Limited in respect of unit transactions are disclosed in Note 8 and Note 10 respectively.

At 15 February 2023, there were no unitholders that hold more than 50% of units in the Fund. Other than disclosed elsewhere in the Financial Statements, there were no transactions between the Fund and related parties during the year.

Amounts paid to AXA Investment Managers UK Limited in respect of administration and registration services are disclosed in Note 5.

### 13 Portfolio transaction costs

	Net purchase cost £'000	Commissions paid £'000	%	Taxes £'000	%	Total purchase cost £'000
<b>2023</b>						
<b>Analysis of purchases</b>						
Equity	12,066	4	0.03	-	-	12,070
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,066</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>-</b>		<b>12,070</b>
	Net sale proceeds £'000	Commissions paid £'000	%	Taxes £'000	%	Total sale proceeds £'000
<b>2023</b>						
<b>Analysis of sales</b>						
Equity	71,328	(25)	(0.04)	-	-	71,303
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,328</b>	<b>(25)</b>		<b>-</b>		<b>71,303</b>
	Net purchase cost £'000	Commissions paid £'000	%	Taxes £'000	%	Total purchase cost £'000
<b>2022</b>						
<b>Analysis of purchases</b>						
Equity	36,609	16	0.04	-	-	36,624
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,609</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>-</b>		<b>36,624</b>
	Net sale proceeds £'000	Commissions paid £'000	%	Taxes £'000	%	Total sale proceeds £'000
<b>2022</b>						
<b>Analysis of sales</b>						
Equity	49,850	(21)	(0.04)	-	-	49,829
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,850</b>	<b>(21)</b>		<b>-</b>		<b>49,829</b>

Commission as a % of average net assets	0.03%	(2022: 0.02%)
Taxes as a % of average net assets	0.00%	(2022: 0.00%)

#### Portfolio dealing spread

The average portfolio dealing spread as at the year end was 0.19% (2022: 0.25%).

## Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)

### 14 Fair value disclosure

	15 February 2023		15 February 2022	
	Assets £'000	Liabilities £'000	Assets £'000	Liabilities £'000
<b>Valuation technique</b>				
Level1 <sup>^</sup>	73,312	-	142,423	-
Level2 <sup>^^</sup>	-	-	-	-
Level3 <sup>^^^</sup>	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,312</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>142,423</b>	<b>-</b>

<sup>^</sup> Level 1: The unadjusted quoted price in an active market for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.

<sup>^^</sup> Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable (i.e. developed using market data) for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.

<sup>^^^</sup> Level 3: Inputs are unobservable (i.e. for which market data is unavailable) for the asset or liability.

The fair value of the Fund's investments has been determined using the hierarchy above.

### 15 Commitments, contingent liabilities and contingent assets

There are no commitments, contingent liabilities and contingent assets as at the balance sheet date (2022: none).

### 16 Post balance sheet events

There are no significant post balance sheet events which require adjustment or disclosure at the year end.

## Distribution Tables

For the year ended 15 February 2023

		Net revenue	Equalisation	Distribution payable/paid	
				Current year	Prior year
A Acc					
Final	Group 1	2.346	-	2.346	1.443
	Group 2	1.038	1.308	2.346	1.443
D Acc*					
Final	Group 1	3.571	-	3.571	
	Group 2	1.247	2.324	3.571	
D Inc*					
Final	Group 1	3.503	-	3.503	
	Group 2	3.503	-	3.503	
R Acc					
Final	Group 1	1.889	-	1.889	-
	Group 2	0.147	1.742	1.889	-
R Inc					
Final	Group 1	1.853	-	1.853	-
	Group 2	0.452	1.401	1.853	-
Z Acc					
Final	Group 1	2.902	-	2.902	1.559
	Group 2	1.636	1.266	2.902	1.559
Z Inc					
Final	Group 1	1.965	-	1.965	1.062
	Group 2	1.176	0.789	1.965	1.062

(All figures shown in pence per unit)

Units are classified as Group 2 for the following period in which they were acquired, thereafter they rank as Group 1 units.

Equalisation is the average amount of income included in the purchase price of Group 2 units and is refundable to holders of these units as a return of capital. Being a capital item it is not liable to income tax, but must be deducted from the cost of units for capital gains tax purposes.

\* D unit class launched on 25 May 2022.

The relevant period for Group 2 units and the payment/transfer dates are shown below:

	Group 2 units from	to	Group 1 & 2 units paid/transferred
Final	16.02.22	15.02.23	14.04.23



## 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:

*Marion Le Morhedec*

Marion Le Morhedec  
Director  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2023



Marcello Arona  
Director  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## Statement of Manager's Responsibilities

### STATEMENT OF THE MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS OF THE FUND

The Financial Conduct Authority's Collective Investment Schemes sourcebook requires the Authorised Fund Manager to prepare financial statements for each annual accounting year which give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland), of the financial affairs of the Fund and of its revenue and expenditure and capital losses for the year.

In preparing the accounts the Manager is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- comply with the disclosure requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice for Authorised Funds and the Trust Deed;
- follow applicable accounting standards;
- keep proper accounting records which enable it to demonstrate that the accounts prepared comply with the above requirements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Fund will continue in business.

The Manager is responsible for the management of the Fund in accordance with its Trust Deed, Prospectus and the Regulations, and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Report of the Trustee

### STATEMENT OF THE TRUSTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORT OF THE DEPOSITARY TO THE TRUSTEE TO THE UNITHOLDERS OF THE AXA FRAMLINGTON JAPAN FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 15TH FEBRUARY 2023.

The Depositary in its capacity as Trustee of AXA Framlington Japan Fund must ensure that the Trust is managed in accordance with the Financial Conduct Authority's Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook, the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, as amended, (together "the Regulations"), the Trust Deed and Prospectus (together "the Scheme documents") as detailed below.

The Depositary must in the context of its role act honestly, fairly, professionally, independently and in the interests of the Trust and its investors.

The Depositary is responsible for the safekeeping of all custodial assets and maintaining a record of all other assets of the Trust in accordance with the Regulations.

The Depositary must ensure that:

- the Trust's cash flows are properly monitored and that cash of the Trust is booked in cash accounts in accordance with the Regulations;
- the sale, issue, repurchase, redemption and cancellation of units are carried out in accordance with the Regulations;
- the value of units of the Trust are calculated in accordance with the Regulations;
- any consideration relating to transactions in the Trust's assets is remitted to the Trust within the usual time limits;
- the Trust's income is applied in accordance with the Regulations; and
- the instructions of the Authorised Fund Manager ("the AFM"), which is the UCITS Management Company, are carried out (unless they conflict with the Regulations).

The Depositary also has a duty to take reasonable care to ensure that the Trust is managed in accordance with the Regulations and the Scheme documents of the Trust in relation to the investment and borrowing powers applicable to the Trust.

Having carried out such procedures as we considered necessary to discharge our responsibilities as Depositary of the Trust, it is our opinion, based on the information available to us and the explanations provided, that, in all material respects the Trust, acting through the AFM:

- (i) has carried out the issue, sale, redemption and cancellation, and calculation of the price of the Trust's units and the application of the Trust's income in accordance with the Regulations and the Scheme documents of the Trust; and
- (ii) has observed the investment and borrowing powers and restrictions applicable to the Trust in accordance with the Regulations and the Scheme documents of the Trust.

Trustee  
HSBC Global Trustee & Fiduciary Services (UK)  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## Report of the Independent Auditor

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE UNITHOLDERS OF THE AXA FRAMLINGTON JAPAN FUND

#### OPINION

We have audited the financial statements of AXA Framlington Japan Fund ("the Fund") for the year ended 15 February 2023, which comprise the Statement of Total Return, the Statement of Change in Net Assets Attributable to Unitholders, the Balance Sheet, the related notes and the Distribution Tables, and the accounting policies of the Fund, which include a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Fund as at 15 February 2023 and of the net revenue and net capital losses on the scheme property of the Fund for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

#### BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report below. We are independent of the Fund in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council's (the "FRC") Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Manager's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern for a period which is 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Manager with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern.

#### OTHER INFORMATION

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our audit report thereon. The Manager is responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine

whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## **OPINIONS ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE RULES OF THE COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT SCHEMES SOURCEBOOK OF THE FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY (THE “FCA”)**

In our opinion:

- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice relating to Authorised Funds, the rules of the Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook of the FCA and the Trust Deed; and
- there is nothing to indicate that adequate accounting records have not been kept or that the financial statements are not in agreement with those records; and
- the information given in the Manager’s report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## **MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matter in relation to which the Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook of the FCA requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- we have not received all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MANAGER**

As explained more fully in the Manager’s responsibilities statement set out on page 34, the Manager is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Manager determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Manager is responsible for assessing the Fund’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Manager either intends to wind up or terminate the Fund or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

## **AUDITOR’S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

## EXPLANATION AS TO WHAT EXTENT THE AUDIT WAS CONSIDERED CAPABLE OF DETECTING IRREGULARITIES, INCLUDING FRAUD

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management.

Our approach was as follows:

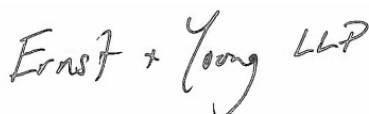
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Fund and determined that the most significant are United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (UK GAAP), Investment Management Association's Statement of Recommended Practice (IMA SORP), the FCA Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook, the Fund's Trust Deed and the Prospectus.
- We understood how the Fund is complying with those frameworks through discussions with the Manager and the Fund's administrators and a review of the Fund's documented policies and procedures.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Fund's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by considering the risk of management override, specifically management's propensity to influence revenue and amounts available for distribution. We identified a fraud risk with respect to the incomplete or inaccurate income recognition through incorrect classification of special dividends and the resulting impact to amounts available for distribution. We tested appropriateness of management's classification of material special dividends as either a capital or revenue return.
- Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures involved review of the reporting to the Manager with respect to the application of the documented policies and procedures and review of the financial statements to test compliance with the reporting requirements of the Fund.
- Due to the regulated nature of the Fund, the Statutory Auditor considered the experience and expertise of the engagement team to ensure that the team had the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify non-compliance with the applicable laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the Fund's unitholders, as a body, pursuant to Paragraph 4.5.12 of the rules of the Collective Investment Schemes Sourcebook of the FCA. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Fund's unitholders those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Fund and the Fund's unitholders as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Ernst & Young LLP  
Statutory Auditor  
Edinburgh  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2023



## Further Information (Unaudited)

### REMUNERATION POLICY OF THE MANAGER

The Manager has approved and adopted AXA IM's Global Remuneration Policy, in accordance with the Regulations, which is consistent with, and promotes, sound and effective risk management; does not encourage risk-taking which is inconsistent with the risk profiles of the Fund's or the Trust Deeds, and does not impair compliance of the Manager's duty to act in the best interests of each of the Fund's.

AXA IM's Global Remuneration Policy, which has been approved by the AXA IM Remuneration Committee, sets out the principles relating to remuneration within all entities of AXA IM (including the Manager) and takes into account AXA IM's business strategy, objectives, and risk tolerance, as well as the long-term interests of AXA IM's shareholders, employees and clients (including the Fund's). The AXA IM Remuneration Committee is responsible for determining and reviewing the AXA IM remuneration guidelines, including the AXA IM Global Remuneration Policy, as well as reviewing the annual remuneration of senior executives of the AXA IM Group and senior officers in control functions.

AXA IM provides both fixed and variable remuneration. An employee's fixed remuneration is structured to reward organizational responsibility, professional experience and the individual's capability to perform the duties of the role. Variable remuneration is based on performance and may be awarded annually on both a non-deferred and, for certain employees, a deferred basis. Non-deferred variable remuneration may be awarded in cash or, where appropriate and subject to local laws and regulation, in instruments linked to the performance of AXA IM Funds. Deferred remuneration is awarded through various instruments structured to reward medium and long-term value creation for clients and AXA IM and long-term value creation for the AXA Group. AXA IM ensures appropriate balances between fixed and variable remuneration and deferred and non-deferred remuneration.

Details of the up-to-date Global Remuneration Policy are published online at <https://www.axa-im.com/remuneration>. This includes the description of how remuneration and benefits are awarded for employees, and further information on the AXA IM remuneration committee. A paper copy of the up-to-date Global Remuneration Policy is also available from the Manager free of charge upon request.

In line with the requirements of the Undertakings for Collective Investments in Transferable Securities (UCITS) V, AXA Investment Managers UK Limited is required to make quantitative disclosures of remuneration. These disclosures are made in line with the currently available guidance on quantitative remuneration disclosures. The amounts shown below reflect payments made in respect of the financial year 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022:

Total amount of remuneration paid and / or allocated to all staff for the year ended December 31, 2022 <sup>(1)</sup>	
Fixed Pay <sup>(2)</sup> (£'000)	220,567
Variable Pay <sup>(3)</sup> (£'000)	274,564
Number of employees <sup>(4)</sup>	2,675

<sup>(1)</sup> Excluding social charges.

<sup>(2)</sup> Fixed Pay amount is based on 2021/22 compensation review final data.

<sup>(3)</sup> Variable compensation, includes:

- the amounts awarded for the performance of the previous year and fully paid over the financial year under review,
- deferred variable remuneration,
- and long-term incentives set up by the AXA Group.

<sup>(4)</sup> Number of employees includes Permanent and Temporary contracts excluding internships (based on Staff list as of 31/12/2022).

**Remuneration to Identified Employee:**

Aggregate amount of compensation paid and / or allocated to risk takers and senior management whose activities have a significant impact on the risk profile of investment vehicles			
	Risk Takers	Senior Management	Total
Fixed Pay and Variable Remuneration (£'000)	136,672	76,261	212,933
Number of employees	277	62	339

**UK Identified Employee Remuneration:**

Weighted amount of compensation paid and / or allocated to risk takers and senior management whose activities have a significant impact on the risk profile of all investment vehicles where AXA IM UK act as Authorised Fund Manager or Alternative Investment Fund Manager			
	Risk Takers	Senior Management	Total
Fixed Pay and Variable Remuneration (£'000)	2,239	1,249	3,488
Number of employees	69	13	82

## 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 year to 15 February 2023 and at the balance sheet date, the Fund did not use SFTs or total return swaps, as such no disclosure is required.

## VALUE ASSESSMENT

It is our duty as Authorised Fund Manager (“AFM”) to act in the best interests of our investors. As part of fulfilling this duty, we need to consider whether the charges taken from our Funds are justified in the context of the overall service and value that we provide to our investors.

The FCA have introduced new rules requiring the Boards of AFMs to consider robustly and in detail whether they are delivering value for money to their investors and to explain the assessment annually in a Value Statement made available to the public.

The Value Statement report is available on the AXA IM website:  
<https://retail.axa-im.co.uk/fund-centre>



## Directory

### The Manager

AXA Investment Managers UK Limited  
22 Bishopsgate  
London, EC2N 4BQ

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

HSBC Global Trustee & Fiduciary Services (UK)  
8 Canada Square,  
London, E14 5HQ  
HSBC Bank plc is a subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc.  
Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

### Fund Accounting Administrator

State Street Bank & Trust Company  
20 Churchill Place  
London, E14 5HJ  
Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

### Legal adviser

Eversheds LLP  
One Wood Street  
London, EC2V 7WS

### Auditor

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

### Dealing and Correspondence

PO Box 10908  
Chelmsford, CM99 2UT

Telephone Dealing & Enquiries 0345 777 5511  
IFA Dealing & Enquiries 0370 707 0073  
If you are calling from outside the UK, please call +44 1268 443976  
Our lines are open Monday to Friday between 9am and 5:30pm