



Future Directions Newsletter 16

– March 2026

Welcome to our latest newsletter.

As before, we have put together a few articles that we hope you may find useful.

We hope the start of 2026 is going well for you, in spite of some of the current world events.

From all at Future Directions



Article: Staying the Course: Maintaining Investment Discipline in Volatile Times

Periods of geopolitical tension, such as the recent escalation involving Iran, naturally create unease in global markets. Headlines can feel alarming, and it's understandable that investors may question whether they should take action to protect their portfolios. Yet history consistently shows that reacting emotionally to short-term events is one of the biggest risks to long-term financial success.

Market volatility during geopolitical crises is not new. Over the past several decades, markets have weathered wars, recessions, political shocks, pandemics, and energy crises. While each event feels unique in the moment, the pattern is remarkably consistent: markets often fall sharply when uncertainty peaks, then recover—sometimes quickly—as clarity returns. Investors who remain invested typically fare far better than those who attempt to time their exit and re-entry.

Your portfolio has been constructed with these moments in mind. Diversification across regions, sectors, and asset classes is designed to help cushion the impact of short-term market swings.

It is also worth remembering that volatility can create opportunity. Market pullbacks often allow long-term investors to buy assets at more attractive valuations, and disciplined strategies such as regular monthly investing can benefit from these lower prices.

While the situation in the Middle East may continue to generate uncertainty, it's important to separate short-term noise from long-term goals. Staying invested, remaining diversified, and keeping a clear focus on your financial objectives are the most reliable ways to navigate periods like this.

If you have concerns or would like to review your investment strategy, we're always here to talk things through. Sometimes a conversation is all it takes to restore confidence and perspective.

Future Directions Financial Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and are entered on the Financial Conduct Authority Register (<http://www.fca.org.uk/register>) under number 690603. The FCA does not regulate tax planning, estate planning and trusts.

Director : Marc Carter

Article: Why Fixing Your Mortgage Rate Can Still Make Sense

With interest rates proving stubborn and no firm signs of meaningful cuts on the horizon, many homeowners are taking a fresh look at the benefits of fixing their mortgage rate. And in today's climate, a fixed deal can offer something genuinely uplifting: stability you can build on.

Fixing your rate means you know exactly what your monthly payments will be, giving you clarity and control at a time when the wider economy feels anything but predictable. That certainty can make budgeting easier, planning more confident, and financial stress noticeably lighter.

While variable rates may seem appealing if you're hoping for future reductions, the reality is that no one can reliably predict when – or even if – those cuts will arrive. In contrast, a fixed rate allows you to lock in today's terms and protect yourself from any unexpected increases. For many households, that peace of mind is worth its weight in gold.

A fixed mortgage doesn't just shield you from volatility; it also gives you a solid foundation to focus on the things that matter most, from family plans to long-term financial goals. In a world full of uncertainty, choosing stability can be a great move.

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.

Article: Venture Capital Trusts: Why They Still Matter as Relief Reduces to 20%

From 6th April, the upfront income tax relief available on Venture Capital Trusts (VCTs) will reduce from 30% to 20%. While this marks a significant shift in the incentive structure, VCTs continue to offer compelling benefits for investors seeking tax-efficient growth and diversification—particularly those comfortable with higher-risk investments.

VCTs were created to encourage investment into early-stage UK businesses, and that core purpose remains unchanged. Investors still benefit from tax-free dividends, tax-free capital gains, and the ability to support innovative companies that drive economic growth. These advantages remain intact despite the reduction in upfront relief.

The move to 20% relief does mean investors should take a closer look at the long-term value of VCTs rather than focusing solely on the initial tax incentive. For many, the appeal lies in the combination of regular tax-free income and exposure to sectors not typically accessible through mainstream portfolios. Historically, established VCT managers have delivered consistent dividend streams, which can be particularly attractive for those seeking supplementary income.

With demand likely to remain strong—especially ahead of the rule change—now is a sensible time to review whether VCTs still fit within your broader tax and investment strategy. For the right investor, they continue to offer a unique blend of tax efficiency, diversification, and long-term growth potential.

VCTs are high risk investments and there may be no market for the shares should you wish to dispose of them. You may lose your capital.

Contact :

Address: 93 Croydon Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 4AQ
Email: info@futuredirections.co.uk
Phone: 0208 658 6464

The information contained within this newsletter is for guidance only and does not constitute advice which should be sought before taking any action or inaction.

The value of your investments can go down as well as up, so you could get back less than you invested. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

The information contained within the VCT article is based on our understanding of legislation, whether proposed or in force, and market practice at the time of writing. Levels, bases and reliefs from taxation may be subject to change.

The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate tax advice.