# Russian millionaire struggles to sell £3.5 million Canonbury home amid local scepticism



In a striking case of market misjudgment, Lukov Nikolov, a Russian millionaire, faced off against the whims of London's housing market when he attempted to sell a former council house in Canonbury for an astonishing £3.5 million. The property, a four-bedroom semi-detached home built in the late 1950s and initially designated for police officers liaising with the Metropolitan Police, has been the subject of widespread ridicule since its listing. Neighbours have noted that Nikolov was compelled to "move in himself" after failing to attract prospective buyers willing to meet his lofty price.

Nikolov contends that his asking price is justified; he invested £1.4 million in extensive renovations aimed at elevating the home’s appeal. These improvements included constructing a basement that reportedly adds significant space, alongside the addition of modern amenities, such as a cinema room. The property now boasts a sprawling 3,650 square feet of living space, leading Nikolov to believe that the £2.3 million increase in value is warranted. However, despite his assertions, the local residential market presents a more sobering reality. Canonbury's average property prices hover around £934,290, with most sales involving flats peaking at about £633,512, while semi-detached homes command an average of £3,873,333.

As house prices in the area have increased by approximately nine percent over recent years, many of Nikolov's neighbours have expressed scepticism regarding his ambitious pricing strategy. One remarked, "If that sells for £3.5 million, I will put my house on the market for £5 million the next day." It is clear that local sentiment does not align with Nikolov’s expectations, as scepticism about the feasibility of such a sale is prevalent.

In a somewhat ironic turn of events, Nikolov has since listed a second property on the same road for £3 million, further complicating his situation. Neighbours are divided; while some admire his boldness—claiming the area's charm and desire for renovated homes could lead to successful sales—others remain staunchly critical. One local stated, “That’s not worth it for the price. They are smoking crack if they think they will get that amount!”

The circumstances surrounding Nikolov's properties also highlight a broader trend: the landscape of London real estate has increasingly become a focal point for wealthy international investors, including many from Russia. The UK's housing market, particularly in affluent areas, has drawn investigations into potential money laundering practices, with Russian oligarchs owning properties worth billions. Initiatives from various councils—including Westminster City Council—aim to combat these issues by considering compulsory purchase orders on properties believed to be acquired through illicit funds. This highlights an underlying tension; while Nikolov’s endeavours in the housing market may reflect individual ambition, they resonate with larger discussions about wealth concentration and the transparency of property ownership in the UK.

With Nikolov now firmly entrenched in the property he once sought to sell, the market continues to pose challenges not only for him but also for other affluent homeowners in the area aspiring to maximise their investments. Such exorbitant listings raise questions about the sustainability of escalating property values and the changing nature of London's real estate market, an arena often characterised by stark contrasts between aspiration and reality.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://metro.co.uk/2024/03/30/this-former-council-house-london-market-3-500-000-20558807/> - A former council house in Canonbury, Islington, London, has been listed for £3.5 million by owner Lukov Nikolov. Built in the 1950s, the property was initially used by police officers relocating to London for the Met Police. Nikolov purchased the house in 2015 for £1.2 million and invested £1.4 million in renovations, including a spacious basement and cinema room, increasing its size to 3,650 sq ft. Despite the substantial investment, the house has faced challenges in attracting buyers at the listed price. ([metro.co.uk](https://metro.co.uk/2024/03/30/this-former-council-house-london-market-3-500-000-20558807/?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.sundayworld.com/news/world-news/london-council-considers-seizing-russian-oligarchs-homes-for-affordable-housing/1555892578.html> - Westminster City Council is considering using compulsory purchase orders to seize properties owned by Russian oligarchs in affluent London areas like Belgravia, Knightsbridge, and Mayfair. The initiative aims to combat money laundering and address the shortage of affordable housing, with approximately 4,000 households on the waiting list. The council faces challenges due to a lack of transparency over property ownership and limited checks on company registrations. ([sundayworld.com](https://www.sundayworld.com/news/world-news/london-council-considers-seizing-russian-oligarchs-homes-for-affordable-housing/1555892578.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/sep/21/london-council-could-seize-homes-dirty-money-affordable-housing> - Westminster City Council is exploring the use of compulsory purchase orders to seize properties acquired with illicit funds in London's wealthiest areas, including Belgravia, Knightsbridge, and Mayfair. The plan aims to repurpose these properties for affordable housing, addressing the city's reputation as a hub for money laundering. The council faces obstacles such as opaque property ownership and insufficient checks on company registrations. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/sep/21/london-council-could-seize-homes-dirty-money-affordable-housing?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/05/25/russia-putin-regime-london-property-portfolio-millions/> - An investigation reveals that Vladimir Putin's regime owns luxury properties across London, collectively worth tens of millions of pounds. These assets are located in some of the capital's most prestigious postcodes. The UK government has recently removed the diplomatic status of several Russian properties suspected of being used as spy bases, allowing law enforcement authorities to access them. ([telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/05/25/russia-putin-regime-london-property-portfolio-millions/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/03/28/how-putins-oligarchs-bought-london> - An analysis reveals that Russians accused of corruption or linked to the Kremlin have purchased at least £1.5 billion worth of property in Great Britain. The true figure is likely higher due to opaque ownership structures. London has become a destination for wealthy Russians seeking to launder reputations and assets, with properties serving as a first step in a broader strategy involving public relations and philanthropic activities. ([newyorker.com](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/03/28/how-putins-oligarchs-bought-london?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61080536> - A dozen sanctioned Russian individuals are linked to an estimated £800 million worth of property in the UK. These assets include multi-million-pound country estates and luxury flats in London's most exclusive areas. Some individuals deny ownership, complicating the enforcement of sanctions. The UK's lack of centralized records and opaque ownership structures make it challenging to fully assess the extent of these holdings. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61080536?utm_source=openai))