# Roman Abramovich could owe UK £1bn over tax dodge that helped bankroll Chelsea FC


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Some of the money that funded Chelsea FC when Mr Abramovich owned it can be traced back to companies involved in the scheme, the BBC and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) also foun

The oligarch's lawyers said he "always obtained independent expert professional tax and legal advice" and "acted in accordance with that advice

Mr Abramovich - who now reportedly divides his time between Istanbul, Tel Aviv and the Russian resort of Sochi - denies having any knowledge of or being personally responsible for any unpaid tax.".d.Joe Powell, a Labour MP who leads a Parliamentary group on fair taxation, called on HM Revenue and Customs to "urgently" investigate the case to recover what could be "very significant amounts of money that could be invested in public services".

At the heart of the scheme was Eugene Shvidler, a former Chelsea FC director and a billionaire businessman in his own right, who is currently challenging the UK government's decision to sanction him for his close links to Mr Abramovich.

Mr Shvidler moved to the USA after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but from 2004 until 2022 he lived in the UK, with properties in London and Surrey.

A tax expert told the BBC that evidence Mr Shvidler had been making strategic decisions on the investments while based in the UK, and not in the BVI, was "a pretty big smoking gun", suggesting the companies should have been paying UK tax.

Lawyers for Mr Shvidler said the BBC was basing its reporting on "confidential business documents that present an incomplete picture" and had "drawn strong and erroneous conclusions as to Mr Shvidler's conduct".

They said "the structure of investments" was "the subject of very careful and detailed tax planning, undertaken and advised on by leading tax advisors".

The scheme involving Mr Abramovich's hedge fund investments was revealed in a huge leak of data that the BBC and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism have been examining for over a year - thousands of files and emails from a Cyprus-based company that administered Mr Abramovich's global empire.