

PROTECTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S CHALK STREAMS

A Guide for Dog Owners

Flea and Tick Treatments



Why Chalk Streams Matter



Chalk streams are among the rarest freshwater habitats on Earth. Only around 200 exist globally, and 85% are in England. Yet almost none are in good ecological health.

In Cambridge, chalk streams such as Hobson's Brook, Cherry Hinton Brook, the River Mel and the River Granta support mayflies, water crowfoot, brown trout, kingfishers and water voles.

These ecosystems rely on clean, mineral-rich water from our chalk aquifers and are extremely vulnerable to pollution, even at very low levels.

Flea and Tick Treatments in our Waterways



Many flea and tick treatments contain powerful insecticides. Some of these medications come in tablet form whilst others are 'spot-on' treatments, applied directly to the skin.



Spot-on products leave a residue on the skin and coat, which can reach waterways when dogs swim, paddle, are bathed soon after treatment, or when bedding, towels or hands are washed.



Unfortunately, the freshwater insects that help keep our chalk streams healthy are highly sensitive to these residues, even at very low concentrations.



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How Dog Owners Can Help



Flea and Tick Treatments

-  **Talk to your vet** about treatments that suit your dog's lifestyle, especially if they swim or are bathed often.
-  If you do use spot-on treatments, avoid bathing your dog or letting them swim for at least 4 days after treatment.
-  Your vet may advise a monthly or three-monthly tablet instead. These reduce wash-off risk, but chemicals can still reach waterways via faeces — so always pick up after your dog.
-  Your vet can also help you plan a treatment schedule that matches your dog's risk level; some dogs may not need year-round treatment.
-  For trusted, vet-approved guidance on using treatment responsibly, visit:

bespotonaware.campaign.gov.uk



Chalk Streams Need You!



Be a Chalk-Stream Champion

Explore your local chalk streams and share what you learn. These rare habitats are jewels on our doorstep, and every dog owner can help keep them thriving.

Did You Know?

Dog numbers have risen sharply recently, and the UK now has around 15.5 million dogs. Our much-loved wildlife is feeling the pressure, not because anyone is doing anything wrong, but simply because more of us are out enjoying these places. Small steps can make a big difference.

Respect Restrictions

Some areas may have access restrictions to give sensitive habitats and ground-nesting birds the space they need.

As a dog owner you can help keep our chalk streams healthy by simply respecting these restrictions.

We'd love your feedback.

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