

Questions re Ashwell Springs protection (September 2026)

(To send to Natural England, Environment Agency & Affinity Water)

1. Where does abstraction of water take place that reduces the water level and the natural flow of water to or from Ashwell Springs?
2. Who (which public authority, or private company / operator) is authorised to abstract water that could flow to Ashwell Springs?
3. Has the reduced flow of water at the Springs evidenced in recent years negatively affected the number of prehistoric flatworms that have survived in the cold, freshwater pools since the end of the last Ice Age. Specifically, the species like ***Crenobia alpina*** and ***Polycelis felina***?
4. How often are populations monitored, and by whom?
5. What specific human or animal actions / incidents would risk or actually cause harm to the historic wildlife in Ashwell Springs?
6. Who is responsible for safeguarding this SSSI?
7. What safeguarding actions should take place?
8. What penalties are appropriate for offences against inappropriate behaviours at the Springs?
9. Are these legally enforceable, and if so by whom?
10. Who is responsible for communicating what are inappropriate behaviours at the Springs?
11. What improvements, if any, are recommended to current signage and physical protection barriers (fences or gates) to discourage inappropriate behaviours and prevent access to vulnerable areas of the SSSI Site?