



UK Brachycephalic Working Group

<http://www.ukbwg.org.uk/>

Organisational Commitments to Responsible Behaviours aimed at Redressing the Serious Welfare Issues from Brachycephaly in Dogs

24th January, 2024

The UK Brachycephalic Working Group (BWG) share a vision of a world where no dog experiences health-related welfare problems attributable to selective breeding for the brachycephalic conformation. The BWG accept that extreme brachycephalic conformation coupled with other extreme conformations, which commonly co-exist in many brachycephalic breeds, are associated with serious health problems in dogs. Health problems associated with the brachycephalic conformation substantially reduce quality of life, compromise the dog's welfare and cause these dogs to suffer.

The BWG considers the health and welfare problems linked to breeding for the brachycephalic conformation are one of the UK's leading canine welfare issues and should be made a priority by all organisations involved in any way with dogs. The BWG accept that human behaviour and cognition play large parts in delaying redress of these welfare issues. However, the BWG believes that the suffering attributable to health problems associated with the brachycephalic conformation can eventually be eliminated, and that socially and welfare responsible behaviours and actions by organisations, businesses and large groups to prioritise animal welfare will play a critical contributor to achieving these welfare goals.

With this background, all BWG member organisations commit to the following actions that we believe help to define an organisation as showing responsible behaviours in relation to redressing the welfare issues from brachycephaly in dogs.

BWG calls on all other organisations who care about the welfare of dogs to also commit to these same actions in full.

Commitment to actions that help to define an organisation as showing responsible behaviours in relation to redressing the serious welfare issues caused by brachycephaly in dogs:

1. Commit to explicitly stating the health and welfare of dogs is a high priority for the work of that organisation.

2. Commit to working collaboratively with other welfare-focused organisations to resolve the brachycephalic health and welfare crisis in dogs.
3. Commit to full compliance with all relevant national legislation in relation to brachycephaly and extreme conformation in dogs.
4. Commit to applying scientific evidence-based principles in all decision-making in relation to brachycephaly in dogs.
5. Commit to support increased genetic diversity which may include controlled and appropriate outcrossing where necessary to promote less extreme conformation in dogs where there is adequate supporting evidence for health and welfare gains.
Note: The Bulldog Breed Council Member Clubs, the French Bulldog Breed Clubs and the Pug Breed Clubs are currently not in a position to commit to supporting outcrossing.
6. Commit to [never using imagery of dogs with brachycephaly for advertising](#) unless such use is aimed specifically at protecting the health and welfare of dogs in relation to brachycephaly.
7. Commit to widely sharing a public message of '[Stop and think before buying a flat-faced dog.](#)'
8. Commit to support training and education within their own memberships on the health and welfare issues related to brachycephaly.