

# Guidelines to assist organisations to play their part to protect flat-faced dogs

Organisational Commitments to Responsible Behaviours aimed at Redressing the Serious Welfare Issues from Brachycephaly (Flat-faced) in Dogs



**Flat-faced dog** breeds like **French Bulldogs, Pugs, and English Bulldogs** are popular, but sadly many of these dogs **suffer from serious health issues** related to their **extreme body shapes**. These extreme shapes include **flattened faces, bulging eyes, skin folds, spinal abnormalities, and shortened tails**.

The UK Brachycephalic Working Group (BWG) aims to mitigate these welfare issues by

1. **Discouraging** acquisition of **flat-faced** dogs
2. **Promoting less extreme body shapes** in future-bred dogs of these breeds
3. **Encouraging** adequate **health measures** for already-owned dogs of these breeds.



**The BWG believe the the suffering related to flat-faced dogs (brachycephaly) can only be ended if all organisations play their part.**

All BWG member organisations commit to the following actions. BWG now calls on all other organisations who care about the welfare of dogs to also publicly commit to these same actions in full:

**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 (flat-faced) 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\*.**

\*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.**

**The full position statement on organisation commitments in relation to brachycephaly in dogs can be accessed here**