



**Position Statement of the Brachycephalic Working Group
on
Avoiding the Use of ‘Flat faced’ (Brachycephalic) Dogs in Advertising, Media, Marketing and
Promotion
June 30, 2018**

The position of the UK Brachycephalic Working Group (a group set up to tackle the welfare issues of brachycephalic dog breeds) is that images of brachycephalic dogs should not be used in marketing, promotional or mass-media without a strong animal-welfare justification. Organisations and individuals can demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility and animal welfare by publicly supporting our campaign.

Some small-to-medium sized brachycephalic breeds (dogs with flat faces/short muzzles including French Bulldogs, Pugs and Bulldogs) have grown hugely in popularity and ownership over recent years, fuelled by their increased prominence in advertising and the wider media.

These breeds are often considered to look appealing, cute, or comical, but breeding towards extreme conformations has led to health and welfare problems in substantial proportions of the brachycephalic dog population. These problems include:

- Breathing difficulties
- Recurring skin fold infections
- Eye ulcers
- Problems giving birth naturally
- Spinal problems

Most owners have the wellbeing of their pet at heart, but many fail to recognise signs such as difficulty breathing or smelly skin folds as evidence of poor health and welfare. These signs are often unfortunately accepted as *normal for the breed*, but are certainly *not normal for a dog*.

In addition, the spike in demand for some brachycephalic breeds has resulted in highly profitable markets for unscrupulous breeders and dealers of puppies from low-welfare breeding establishments, both in the UK and abroad. This has severe welfare consequences for both the puppies themselves and also the breeding animals used to produce them.

The welfare impact from these issues can be reduced by curbing the demand for brachycephalic breeds and by improving the health of those dogs that are bred. This is a goal that is shared by all

those who care about dogs, including the veterinary profession, welfare charities, scientists, breed clubs and responsible breeders and owners.

Images of brachycephalic dog breeds are commonly used as promotional aids in the media. The Brachycephalic Working Group (BWG) is concerned that the use of brachycephalic dogs as promotional aids in the media is perpetuating the appeal and desirability of these breeds and therefore harming their welfare. We ask responsible advertisers, brands, companies and influencers to work with us and play a key role in improving dog welfare by *not using brachycephalic dogs as promotional aids in the media*.

Organisations and individuals can publicly support our campaign to stop the use of brachycephalic dogs as promotional aids in the media by contacting the [BWG bwg@thekennelclub.org.uk](mailto:bwg@thekennelclub.org.uk) and formally committing to this goal.