



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

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Tony Allcock OBE
Chairman
The Kennel Club

Via e-mail: tony.allcock@thekennelclub.org.uk

Dear Mr Allcock:

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to urge you, as chairman of The Kennel Club, to ensure brachycephalic breeds, including but not limited to pugs, Pekingese, English bulldogs, French bulldogs, and Cavalier King Charles spaniels, are removed from the 2023 Crufts dog show and all future shows.

Because humans have bred these dogs to have extreme and unnaturally flat faces, many bulldogs, pugs, Pekingese, and other flat-faced breeds can barely breathe – let alone go for a walk or chase a ball – without gasping for air due to their shortened airways. As the world’s largest dog show, Crufts can help by refusing to celebrate and promote dogs with these unnatural features, which result in enormous suffering for dogs as well as hefty veterinary bills and heartbreak for their guardians.

A recent study conducted by the Royal Veterinary College found that “the Pug has now diverged to such an extent from mainstream dog breeds that it can no longer be considered as a typical dog from a health perspective”. Dr Dan O’Neill, lead author of the study, concluded, “It is time now that we focus on the health of the dog rather than the whims of the owner.”

Last year, a court in Norway ruled that the breeding of English bulldogs and Cavalier King Charles spaniels by humans is cruel and results in health problems. Following the ruling, veterinarian Dr Scott Miller said, “All kennel clubs have to take responsibility that they set those breeding standards, and those standards have become so insane that these dogs are struggling. They’re in pain, they’re uncomfortable and in a lot of cases, they need surgical correction to be normal.” Other countries are looking to introduce similar bans on brachycephalic breeds, and the Netherlands is considering prohibiting ownership of these animals to address the cruelty of producing dogs with unnatural features that cause severe health problems.

The Kennel Club must realise that the tide is turning and take a stand against promoting dogs who spend their lives in misery. You state on your website that “physical exaggerations that are in any way to the detriment of health are not acceptable”, and so, given the wealth of evidence that shows how vulnerable flat-faced breeds are to chronic health issues, now is the time to take action. Of course,

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adopting a homeless dog is far more considerate than buying a “pedigree” puppy. But removing breeds prone to deformity and suffering from Crufts is the least The Kennel Club can do. We ask you to consider this important matter, for dogs’ sake.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KW', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kate Werner
Senior Campaigns Manager
PETA