



To: Jon Greenwood, Acting Chief Executive, Direct Line Group
From: Yvonne Taylor, PETA

Via e-mail: jonathan.greenwood@directlinegroup.co.uk

Dear Mr Greenwood:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) concerning the suffering endured by flat-faced dog breeds and to ask you – as owner of Churchill – to do the right thing and retire the insurance brand's English bulldog mascot.

It's no secret that the public is influenced by what they see depicted in popular culture, and as such, Churchie has undoubtedly boosted the popularity of English bulldogs over the years. As a pet insurance provider, you'll also be aware of the mounting evidence that [brachycephalic dogs](#) – which include English and French bulldogs, pugs, Pekingese, Boston terriers, boxers, Cavalier King Charles spaniels, and shih tzus – suffer from painful and even fatal health conditions.

These dogs experience exercise intolerance, lack of oxygen, inflamed airways, vomiting, and collapse, among other symptoms. Bulldogs like Churchie have been bred to the point that their snouts are now pushed so far back against their skulls that there isn't enough space to accommodate [healthy anatomical features](#), making the dogs highly prone to difficult, obstructive [breathing](#). A [study](#) published in the journal *Scientific Reports* that assessed more than 900,000 dogs found flat-faced dogs are at least twice as likely to suffer from heatstroke compared to other breeds, with bulldogs 14 times more likely to suffer from it. Extremely shortened skulls are also [the leading cause of death](#) for bulldogs. Purposely breeding dogs to have deformities that meet aesthetic standards is cruel and unethical, and no responsible company should be promoting it.

Restrictions have been imposed on breeding breathing-impaired breeds in [Austria](#) and [Germany](#), and it has been banned in [Norway](#) and [the Netherlands](#), which is also now preparing to ban owning these animals or featuring them in advertising because of the serious animal welfare concerns over the medical conditions they commonly experience. With the cost of living crisis, breathing impaired breeds are at even greater risk of physical deterioration, neglect, abandonment, and even death if their guardians fail to recognise medical issues, can't afford to keep up with their insurance payments or pay for excess vet bills, or refuse to provide them with the care they require.

The time has come for Churchill to say "Oh no" to bulldogs and any other representations of flat-faced dog breeds in its advertising. By

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PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
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company number 3135903.

Affiliates

- PETA US
- PETA Asia
- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands

announcing a rescued, mixed-breed mutt as Churchill's new mascot, you would be championing the underdogs of this world and win the praise of animal lovers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvonne Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end of the word "Taylor".

Yvonne Taylor