

Template 3 - Reply to your MP

Dear [**MP name**],

Thank you for your response on this matter. It is appreciated.

The problem in the UK is irresponsible breeding and ownership. Despite campaigns to address both for the last 30 years, we just seem to keep kicking the can further down the road until there is a tragedy, at which point a sticking plaster is attached. As was proven by the introduction of Section 1 of the DDA back in 1991, this does not stop backyard breeding, poor ownership, nor reduce bites.

Whilst there are already a range of powers to deal with owners who do not control their pets, all of the dogs recently involved in tragic incidents were already known to be nuisances at best, and dangerous at worst, yet nothing was done until deaths occurred.

Another concern is that the statistics being used to support the ban are inaccurate to say the least. There is no mechanism in the UK whereby dogs are traced (the requirement to microchip and keep the details up to date is another law that is routinely not enforced, similar to the requirement for collars and tags), and there is no mechanism to record dog bite information. The percentages used by the anti-bull breed campaign group 'Bully Watch' to support the ban which have been picked up and cited as fact by various media outlets and even a few politicians have been gathered through social media posts. Indeed several of the dogs named in the recent attacks have subsequently been found not to be XL Bully's, a fact which the media have chosen not to revisit after causing hysteria.

It is also important to re-iterate that thousands of dogs will lose their lives needlessly because of this law.

Despite what certain sections of the media have claimed, the XL Bully is not a breed of dog, it is a type, and similar to the 'Pit Bull' type, lots of perfectly legal breeds and crossbreeds therefore run the risk of being killed because of some vague measurements that will inevitably be used as the 'breed' standard. Dog Legislation Officers have confirmed that breeds such as Labradors, Boxers and Staffordshire Bull Terriers are among the legal breeds regularly caught up in the mess that is Breed Specific Legislation.

Stories regarding litters of puppies with the same legal breed parents and same DNA, where some have been killed for measuring Pit Bull type and others allowed to live - how on earth is that scientific and how does that keep the public safe? How can these dogs ever be eradicated if two legal breeds can produce a dog that grows up to 'look' dangerous? How can owners ever be sure they are not breaking the law when the legally bred puppy they buy today grows up to 'look' dangerous

tomorrow? How can owners be sure if their dog is of 'type' when the measurements used are so vague dogs currently have to be taken away for weeks at a time to be reviewed by experts (all of whom differ in opinions as to what constitutes type)? Equally, if the rules that currently apply to banned types is extended, how many thousands of dogs deemed type, irrespective of their actual breeding and personalities, will have to be killed simply because their owners can no longer get health insurance for them (as you probably know there are no health insurance option for legislated dogs), or because they live in rented accommodation and their leases do not allow dogs of banned types?

Will the politicians and media personalities pushing for this be willing to volunteer their time at shelters assisting the vets with the euthanasia of the countless perfectly friendly and healthy dogs that will be affected by this or will they be leaving it to the charities and teenage kennel hands who want no part in this?

Breed neutral legislation that focuses on regulated breeding, owners being held to account, and education programmes have worked wonders elsewhere. The model used in Calgary, Canada is a shining example of how to actually reduce the problem of dangerous dogs.

If the government truly wants to do this, genuinely cares about the people being hurt, and this is not just a political exercise, why would they not use a model that's proven to work and does not negatively impact animal welfare into the bargain as the current law does?

I'll sign off with a link to a 3 minute interview conducted on the Jeremy Vine show last week with James McNally, a solicitor who specialises in dog bite claims and known in the industry as the 'Dog Bite Solicitor'. He claims that of 400 active cases he is involved in not one is attributable to the 'XL Bully' type and the ban is "a cheap fix":
<https://fb.watch/nhcPQrhzmT/>([https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffb.watch%2FnhcPQrhzmT%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7C98fdb3a7bfac4221426708dbc101119b%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638315982564745702%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAilCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TLwaPNx6dsIYz7Z2dwuZuD7Fk92G%2BXPe8rFakC9EdrE%3D&reserved=0\)](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffb.watch%2FnhcPQrhzmT%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7C98fdb3a7bfac4221426708dbc101119b%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638315982564745702%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAilCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TLwaPNx6dsIYz7Z2dwuZuD7Fk92G%2BXPe8rFakC9EdrE%3D&reserved=0)))

I just hope someone is brave enough here to do the right thing and listen to the experts rather than the tabloids.

Kind regards
[*your name*]