



## Interesting Case from our web site [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)



### "Tilly" - Long Haired Cat Coat Maintenance



Tilly

Generally speaking, cats provide a much better "investment return" than dogs! They usually cost less to purchase initially, in fact many will be given away free of charge and they usually live considerably longer!

Their running costs are also usually considerably smaller in relation to feeding and maintenance. Veterinary bills are usually less on the basis that drugs dispensed are calculated on a bodyweight basis.....the bigger they are the more expensive they are to run!

Investment in time is also a major consideration for most owners and in this area cats win hands down over dogs as they are mostly self sufficient. They amuse themselves, exercise as they wish and most importantly understand the concept of toilet training.

The main exception to this general rule are long haired cats!

There are 3 main hair types in animals.

**Guard hairs:** 1 hair to each follicle provide the waterproof top layer.

**Vibrissae:** Thicker than guard hairs they project deep into the skin with associated nerve endings at their base. These act as important sensory organs in the cat.

**Wool hairs** or undercoat: These provide insulation by trapping air between them. Many wool hairs can sprout from 1 follicle.

In the spring cats will moult most heavily and it is at this time when owners of long haired cats like "Tilly" come to realise that "self sufficiency" does not always extend to removing the volume of hairs that can be lost by certain individuals. Fortunately, Tilly has been well groomed over the years and demonstrates some patience when some "clumps" or "matts" have to be teased out!

Other breeds such as Persians have large numbers of wool hairs for each follicle and are frequent visitors to the surgery for "Sedation and dematting".

Chinchillas have the densest coat known with over 70 hairs from each follicle.

Having only ever owned short haired cats my experience of "difficult grooming" has been limited to my daughters' hair who have all expressed a desire for sedation before their "dematt!"

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This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at [www.fairfield-vets.co.uk](http://www.fairfield-vets.co.uk)

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