

Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

# Get to know

## Claire Fayers



Claire Fayers grew up in South Wales, went to university in Canterbury, and is now back in Wales where she likes to tramp around castles in the rain, hoping to see dragons. She lives with her husband and two cats who sit on her keyboard and stop her from writing.

When the cats will let her, Claire writes funny, fantastical adventures for children. You can keep up with Claire's latest news on her website [www.clairefayers.com](http://www.clairefayers.com).



### Summary:

Meet Idris, the teenage giant king on a quest to collect stories. As he travels across Wales in this anthology, readers encounter a vengeful house goblin, a ghost that steals life from the living, dwarves that have moved in beneath



someone's garden, a tea party of Lady ghosts, a furry trickster goblin and many other fascinating and devious fairy folk besides!

### When did you realise you wanted to write, was there an 'eureka moment'?

Growing up, I always loved making up stories, but I never thought my writing was any good and it never occurred to me that this was something I could do for a living. I sort of fell into it when I left university. I was job-hunting and I saw an advertisement for a distance-learning course in freelance writing and I thought I might as well give it a go. I never expected it to turn into a career.

I started off writing for magazines and websites, which was very good training. My first book (*The Accidental Pirates 1*) came about because I spotted a writing competition for children's books and I thought I might as well give it a go.

Come to think of it, a lot of what I've done is a result of thinking I'll just give it a go and see what happens!

### Tell us a little about *Welsh Giants, Ghosts and Goblins*, what's the background?

*Welsh Giants, Ghosts and Goblins* is a set of stories inspired by Welsh tales, and held together by the adventures of Idris the teenage giant king, who leaves his castle to go in search of stories.

Some of the stories are retellings with a modern twist. Others are mash-ups and spin-offs using one or more traditional tales as a starting point. Each one has an introduction explaining where the original stories came from. As well as being an entertaining collection, I'm hoping it will inspire readers to go looking for their own stories to retell.

The book happened because I've previously written a collection of Welsh Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends. When I was researching

that book I found so many stories that I couldn't possibly include them all so when Firefly Press suggest I might like to write a book for them, I jumped at the idea. We didn't want to be another collection of retellings, though, and so we made it a little different.

### In what way have libraries influenced you during your lifetime?

Libraries have been a huge influence. I couldn't do without them. My early trips as a child let me to develop my reading, discover the kinds of stories I liked, and gave me glimpses of a much larger world outside of my South Wales town. Books fuelled my ambition as a child and allowed me to hope and dream.

I spent a while working in a library before going full-time as an author so I've seen things from the other side of the counter too. I'm a regular at my local village library – being able to order books from anywhere in the county and pick them up just down the road is a huge benefit. I belong to the book group, too, which is a great way of getting me out of my reading comfort zone, and we have some hilarious discussions.

### Do you have suggestions of how to encourage children and young people to read more for pleasure?

Let children choose their own books and don't make them finish a book if they're not enjoying it. Nothing kills the love of reading like slogging through something in a state of boredom. Never criticise anything a child is reading. Set an example by joining your library and reading for pleasure yourself, and discuss what you're reading with your children. Make books part of your everyday lives. Audio books are great too.



... more Q&As on the website [libraries.wales](http://libraries.wales)