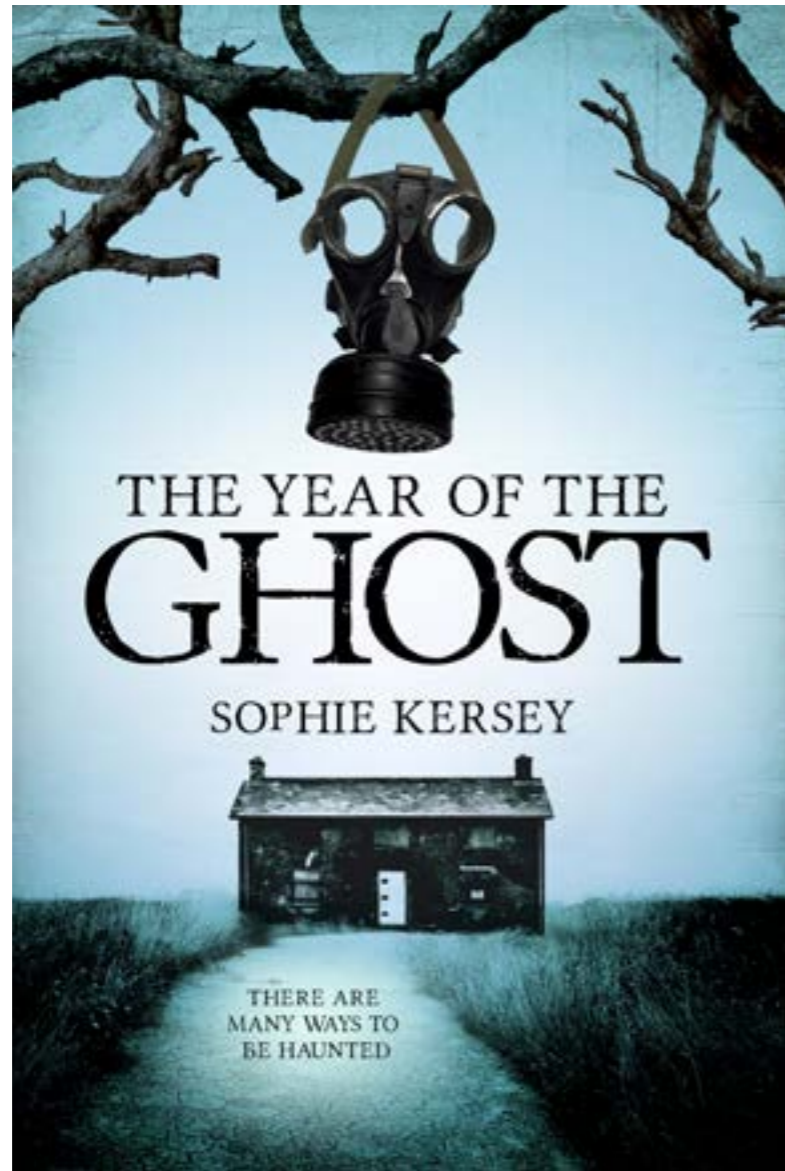


# A lifetime of wonderful Welsh holidays inspires haunting new novel



## Who is haunting Hal?

The annual holiday in Wales is 12-year-old Hal's favourite fortnight. But this year something is wrong at his grandad, Grand's cottage.

A strange girl stalks Hal and a chilling presence disturbs his nights. His friend suspects paranormal activity, but who is haunting Hal? Is it someone from Grand's time here as a wartime evacuee, or from Mum's childhood visits? Among the usual laughs, grumbles, walks and Welsh cakes, Hal's Mum struggles to cope with his Dad's secret torment. As the haunting escalates, the past will no longer be silenced. Can Hal survive what is unleashed now?

## West Wales is the star in this spooky family mystery

Sophie Kersey was inspired to write *The Year of the Ghost* by a much-loved annual holiday. 'My Dad comes from the tiny village of Bont Goch in Ceredigion, and spent an idyllic childhood there during the war.'

After the war, the family settled in Kent, where Sophie's father married, and she and her sister were born. 'In 1974 when I was ten, Dad got his first car and immediately took us to Bont Goch. We fell in love with the scenery, with streams to dam, mountain walks and lovely beaches. People from Dad's childhood were still living in Bont Goch then. We were welcomed into house after house and offered salmon sandwiches, tea and cake in all of them!'

Every year since, the family have rented holiday accommodation around Bont Goch and later Llangrannog. 'We carried on visiting through my teens and twenties, taking our own children as they grew up. Now my son's fiancé comes too. It's the place we all think of when we want to feel at peace.'

These holidays form the backdrop for *The Year of the Ghost*. 'The family in the novel is fictional, and so is the haunting,' Sophie says, 'but the scenery is real! And I have pilfered details from our holidays and from my Dad's childhood memories. I also did research about the area, and Dad's cousin, Carys Briddon, a contributor to local history books, helped a lot.'

A literary consultant said of *The Year of the Ghost*: '...the greatest strength of the story ... is location. The natural environment and the Welsh setting come across incredibly well. There is lyrical writing which is just beautiful in itself. There are real places – cafés towns, beaches, cliff-paths, so the whole thing is anchored and the reader really feels as if they've visited the locality.'

'I was so glad to hear that I'd managed to convey my love for this part of Wales,' Sophie says. 'This summer we did a walk from Bont Goch. It was just breathtaking, and it struck me again that the scenery around Dad's home village is as beautiful as any I've ever seen.'



*The Shop, Bont Goch, where the author's father spent the war. It was owned by his grandfather, James Pierce Evans.*



*The scenery around Llangrannog (above) and Bont Goch (below) that inspired the novel.*



Sophie Kersey worked in publishing for thirty years before 'going rogue' to follow her own writing dreams. She is now a freelance writer and editor, and published psychological thriller *Unspeakable Things* in 2018. *The Year of the Ghost* is her second novel. She lives in Kent with her husband and has two grown-up sons.

Sophie is available for interview and can be contacted at [sophiekersey@gmail.com](mailto:sophiekersey@gmail.com) or 07732 252154  
Facebook page: Sophie Kersey, Author  
Website: [sophiekerseyauthor.com](http://sophiekerseyauthor.com)

*Author photograph by Roddy Paine*