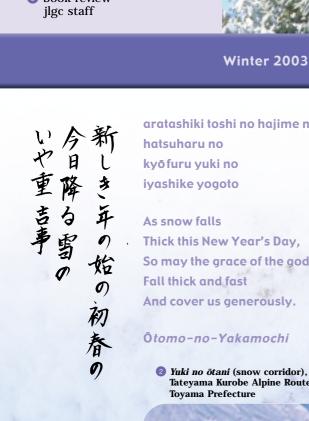
myriad leaves

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1 Snow Festival, Sapporo, Hokkaido

Winter 2003/04 • Issue 43



aratashiki toshi no hajime no

So may the grace of the gods

2 Yuki no ōtani (snow corridor), Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route,



The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations Founded in 1988, CLAIR is a joint organisation representing Japan's designated cities and 3.232 municipal 7 pre ures.

3 Skiing in Miyagi Prefecture © Tourism Division of Miyagi Prefectural Govern

Myriad Leaves is the English-language title for the earliest collection of Japanese poetry. It contains 4,516 waka poems, the last of which is dated AD759. There is uncertainty over the intention of the title: it could mean either 'Collection of ten thousand leaves' or 'Collection for ten thousand generations



letter from the editor

Akemashite omedetō gozaimasu, or 'A Very Happy New Year' to all our readers!

Thanks to all of you who offered support and suggestions for the "new look" myriad leaves. All comments have been taken on board, and we hope you will find many of your wishes reflected in this issue.

November and December 2003 became gradually calmer after the insanely busy Autumn. In addition to attending to the daily business of the office, JLGC staff continued to host a steady stream of visitors from Japanese local authorities over the two months, and held a successful Japan Day Seminar in Glasgow on November 7th, before winding down into the festive season.

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2004 is now upon us, and the JLGC has already begun preparations to say goodbye to our second-year staff in April, and to welcome a fresh batch of secondees from Japan. Although the first few months of the year are not traditionally the most hectic for JLGC, all the staff are finding plenty to keep them occupied: we are working with the Japanese Embassy JET Desk in interviewing JET Programme applicants; assisting a number of visitors from Japanese local governments with their research; hosting the Japan Study Tour 2003 participants for a feedback meeting and generally preparing for the year ahead.

According to the Chinese zodiac, 2004 is the year of the monkey. Apparently, this means that we can look forward to a progressive and upbeat year, when business booms, and great advances are made in knowledge and inventions. I hope that this will be true for you, and wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2004.



Angela Harkness Robertson, Editor



Wedding bells have been ringing here at JLGC – for no less than two members of staff. Best wishes go to Masayuki Sugino, who married his childhood sweetheart, Satoko, on 7th November last year; and to Saori Shibata, who married David Bailey (a former member of JLGC staff, for those of you with long

January 2004. Double congratulations to David and Saori, as they are listening out for the pitter patter of tiny feet; their sleepless nights are due to start sometime in summer. Of course, we couldn't let these momentous occasions go by without some acknowledgement, so JLGC staff helped the





newlyweds celebrate their marriages with a delicious dinner at the Ritz on 19th January.

We're sure that all our readers will join us in wishing the brides and grooms a long, happy, and wonderful future together.

Farewell

Goodbye and thank you to Naoko Kawakami, who interned part-time at JLGC from September till November 2003. She was a great help to all staff, particularly to those members researching Sweden; Naoko speaks Swedish as well as fluent Japanese and English. We all miss her, and wish her all the best for the future.















CAL JAPANES

Angela Harkness Robertson & Yoshiyuki Kirino

GREMLINS DISAPPEARING FROM E-VOTING

Angela Harkness Robertson

Despite the cost and one or two glitches, the January 25 mayoral election in Rokunohemachi, Aomori Prefecture, proved another step forward for e-voting. For the first time in Japan, e-voting was introduced for absentee ballots: previously, absentee votes were only valid after confirmation that voters were alive on election day, and had not moved out of the municipality; with revisions to the Public Offices Election Law (which took effect in December), absentee votes are now valid at the time they are cast.

Counting absentee votes electronically significantly speeded up the overall ballot counting, with three e-voting machines used for absentee votes, and 33 for regular voting.

Voters cast their votes on touch screens: their votes were then processed in the machines' memory cards, before the 36 memory cards were collected from the different polling stations and brought to a ballot-counting office. The counting of all votes was completed in only 23 minutes.

Personnel costs were reportedly cut by 40% to ¥140,000 (£731*), but this was not enough to cover the ¥1.26million (£6,575) rental fee for the voting machines.

Cost is one of the main obstacles to be overcome: the rent for an e-voting machine starts at ¥400,000 (£2,088). In big cities with huge numbers of voters, the total rent would run into tens of millions of yen. Some local governments are reluctant to spend large amounts of money on machines that would only be used for elections, despite the fact that central government contributes half of the cost to install evoting equipment. Little wonder, then, that so far, only eight municipalities have introduced e-voting.

Then there are the technical problems. In Niimi, Okayama Prefecture (the first city to introduce e-voting), two machines did not work. Fortunately, spare machines were used, and voting was not seriously affected. More seriously in Ebina, Kanagawa Prefecture, more than 2,000 votes cast were blank, and the number of votes counted by the machines did not tally with the number of voters who cast ballots. Later, the problem was blamed on inadequate monitoring of training in use of the machines.

In Rokunohemachi, officials received four hours of training and conducted a rehearsal. There were no problems with voting or ballot-counting procedures.

More local governments are expected to jump on the bandwagon, so e-voting could soon be introduced in national elections as well as local ones.

SHIGA'S CHEMICAL CLEANUP

Angela Harkness Robertson

Shiga Prefectural government are set to subsidise farmers in a bid to reduce chemical use and clean up Lake Biwa. Farmers who halve their use of chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers will be entitled to the new government subsidy, which is to be introduced in fiscal 2004, and is expected to cost ¥100million (£521,855) in its first year.

The government hopes the scheme will reduce chemicals in 20% of the prefecture's rice paddies by 2010. Applicants meeting the required standards, such as owning at least 0.5 hectares of rice paddies, will enter into a five-year contract with the prefectural government, who will pay about ¥5,000 (£26) per 0.1 hectare of farmland growing 45 designated varieties of fruit, vegetables or rice. The subsidy is intended to cover expenses resulting from lower chemical use, like lower crop yields, extra costs for organic fertilisers, other materials, and additional labour costs.

One of the main aims of the subsidy is to clean up Lake Biwa. The quality of Lake Biwa's water has been declining rapidly over recent years; agricultural waste water accounts for 15% of the lake's water pollution. Shiga prefectural government hopes that the subsidy will help restore the lake's water quality to its pre-1970 level, while also producing safer agricultural products.

*All currency conversions are approximate, and were correct at time of going to press

. . BULLET TRAIN SERVICE IN KYUSHU

Yoshiyuki Kirino

The Kyushu Shinkansen dream is becoming a reality. From 13th March 2004, the Shinkansen Tsubame (the bird, "swallow") will take only 30 minutes to travel the 126.1km between Shin Yatsushiro in Kumamoto and Kagoshima Chuo in Kagoshima.

Further, the trip between Hakata in Fukuoka and Kagoshima Chuo (256.8km) will take only a little over one hour by 2012. Kyushu will become a closely linked region.

Kagoshima Prefecture residents are delighted that the bullet train service is coming to Kyushu island. They hope the line will reach Hakata as soon as possible, so they might be able to travel to Aomori from Kagoshima without changing trains. It has a salutary effect on the local economy not only in the Kyushu area but also in Kagoshima.

We expect that many visitors will come to Kagoshima from all over the country by way of

the Kyushu Shinkansen. RELAY **TSUBAME** HAKATA Shin-Tosu PHOTOS/GRAPHICS. Kurume Courtesy of Japan Convention Newsletter, Shin-Omuta Shin-Tamana Kumamoto Japan National Tourist Organisation SHINKANSEN TSUBAME Shin-Yatsushiro Shin-Minamata Izumi Sendai **KAGOSHIMA-CHOU**

International Links

Dave Wilcox, Cabinet Member for External Affairs, Derbyshire County Council

When Toyota Motor Company announced it was to set up a car plant in Derbyshire in 1988, I doubt that many people in our county knew that there was a Japanese city with the same name as the car company.

Today, Toyota City has forged a unique link with the County Council, South Derbyshire District Council and Derby City Council, and the relationship goes from strength to strength.

Back in the late 1980's, Dr Toyoda, then head of the worldwide company, said the "creative" package put together by Derbyshire County Council was "impressive" and the deciding factor in moving to the county. In addition, there were the county's central location in Britain, the skills of local people and its distribution, communications and overall infrastructure.

Of course there could be no incentives which broke European regulation, but it was at the cultural level where Derbyshire was at its strongest.

1) We offered places in local schools for the children of Japanese families whose parents were seconded to Derbyshire.

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- In partnership with our further education colleges, we helped the Japanese community establish a Saturday school which allows weekly cultural interchange amongst the Japanese people.
- 3) We worked hard to develop an appreciation and understanding of Japanese culture and sought to build lasting relationships between people in Toyota City and our county, city and district councils.

In the mid-90's, the three local councils signed a twinning agreement with Toyota City,

thus formalising a link which had developed from the early 90's. We had begun by sending and receiving 20 youngsters to and from Japan every other year, Derbyshire students visiting Japanese summer

camps and home staying with families in one year, whilst in another year Japanese students would visit our International Work Camp, involve themselves in environmental projects, visit our outdoor pursuits centres and most importantly, stay in the homes of Derbyshire families and learn to live with, like and even love each other.

Twinning brought a new focus to the process. One of our schools started teaching Japanese to GCSE and a Post-16 Consortium now facilitates learning opportunities to an even higher level. Today, twenty Derbyshire youngsters visit Japan each year and Derbyshire hosts twenty visitors from Toyota City.

However, this isn't all.

Football teams had been competing with each other in the mid-90's and by the turn of the century, Toyota City Youth Choir had performed throughout Derbyshire and our own Derby and Derbyshire Wind Band had performed in several venues in Japan.

Following an exchange of visits in 2001, our programme extended yet further. Twenty photographers from Toyota City came to capture the brilliance and beauty of the Derbyshire countryside, gave us a very different take on many of the day to day things we take for granted, and published a photographic record to complement our own "Derbyshire, a wonderful place to grow" publication.



Celebration of the millionth Toyota car produced in Derbyshire

Next we were visited by the Toyota City Cultural Foundation with an eye to producing dance performances throughout the county. This year twenty-five gardeners joined us. They were given access to gardens in our country houses, to local English gardens, and to Japanese gardens in the county. In addition they visited municipal sites, well-dressings and of course some beautiful, natural countryside. Most of the gardeners were amateurs. But with Expo 2005 to be held in Aichi prefecture (and Toyota City due to play host to many thousands of visitors) the professionals wanted to know how we kept the flowers in bloom and the techniques which we used to sustain our municipal displays.

The impact of these exchanges has been to cement relationships between gardener and gardener, photographer and photographer, artistic performer and creative professionals.

Our children's university has recently sponsored the local learning and development of the unique Japanese game of "Go", in which Education Secretary Charles Clark is apparently now showing a personal interest, and preparations are underway to work out ways in which Derbyshire might become involved in Expo 2005.

Obviously, e-mail links are also being exploited and Toyota City already has a Derbyshire website, giving information in both Japanese and English, on the main features of the Derbyshire landscape.

The county has gained at minimal cost. Through extensive use of home stay, we have made visiting Japan feasible for many who would never otherwise have dreamed of visiting the Pacific Rim. Our cultural perspective has been greatly widened and our understanding of a different and exciting culture has been much enhanced. Through email, individual friendships have been sustained. Perhaps most importantly, if any other motor company cares to establish a plant in Derbyshire, we have a wellestablished Japanese company sited in the county that I hope will confirm we do what we say and we sustain it long-term.



Group of photographers who visited Derbyshire in 2003

KUMAMOTO







NAGANO

NAGASAKI

NARA

Last issue, we introduced two JET Programme participants who were on their way out to Japan: Roy to work in Nagano as an Assistant Language Teacher; Victoria to work as Coordinator for International Relations in Yamaguchi. This issue, we catch up with them and find out what they've been up to, and how reality of life in Japan matches their previous expectations.

I have just returned from Saitama, where I participated in the 5th All-Japan ALT Soccer Championship, the finals of which were held in Saitama Stadium, where numerous World Cup matches were held. Eight teams from all over Japan participated in the finals (a misnomer, since it was really a final tournament). The top eight teams were decided in an earlier competition held at Sugadaira in Nagano: four teams from Eastern Japan; four from Western Japan.



On the day, I had to be up at 03.45 to be on time to meet up with the other bleary-eyed members of the Naganoken team at a rest-stop on the motorway, from where we travelled as a convoy to Saitama.

Upon reaching Saitama Stadium, we had only 35 minutes to warm up before our first match. We played three matches on our first day and won all of them comfortably – we were on fire! Our supporters, no doubt inspired by our kit (which bears an uncanny resemblance to that of Ecuador) were chanting, and even our normally taciturn Japanese fans were cheering wildly. It was that sort of event.

After a night's rest at the hotel (the one where the Brazilian and Belgian football teams stayed), we were firedup for our first match of the second (final) day, which had been organised as a knock-out stage. We won, and were

through to the quarter-finals against Aichi. It was a close match but unfortunately, we failed to score. With chances rare for both sides, it was Aichi who managed to capitalise on their single effort at goal, which was deflected off another player. Despite our heavy hearts at losing, we were unwilling to lose our third place play-off which was to be played in Saitama stadium itself. (The previous matches were held on smaller pitches outside the stadium).

The stadium is magnificent. I only hope that Wembley will be as good as this. The changing rooms were amazing. We had our own players' lounge, complete with pool table, massage area (unfortunately without a masseuse!), an onsen and an indoor warm-up area. It really was an experience. We trooped out into the stadium. Shook hands, bowed to the other team, acknowledged our fans, and even won new fans! It felt like I was in the Premiership.

Needless to say we won our match (we had already played and beaten the opposing team twice that weekend) and came third overall. It was, however, close between the top three teams (Osaka, Aichi, and Nagano-us!) and I have no doubt that the next major tournament in June will be a bitterly fought contest. Before that, I shall be hitting the beautiful ski slopes of Nagano followed by the natural onsen. Ah! This is the life, eh? **Roy Fu**

The realities of my job differ slightly from my expectations. My image of glitterin events and gree visiting dignitaria not materialised the day-to-day CIR sibilities are quite a So far I have



various events incuurry a counters

Halloween party and an exchange students welcome party. Both of these were successful but made me all too aware of the problems of event planning and suffice to say there is definitely room for improvement! However, I have enjoyed the event planning side of the job.

In the last four months I have spent a fair amount of time at local schools and kindergartens in a number of capacities. I have given speeches on topics such as 'Japan through foreign eyes', 'England' and others as well as just being an international presence for local children to get used to. At first I resented being thrown from school to school, as I had an 'I'm not an ALT' mentality, but I have come to realise that actually this is the most rewarding part of my job. If Japan is to internationalise then it is going to be through the children as most adults, not just Japanese, are already set in their ways. So, spending time with local children and watching them learn their first English words and listening to English stories, even if they don't understand a word, has given me great pleasure.



Most days, however, I find I have far too much spare time. I am trying to use this productively by studying Japanese and helping out people in the office with their English and so on but I naturally thrive when busy so this has been a bit of a struggle for me. My 'idleness' doesn't seem to worry anyone else particularly so I am learning to live with it! I hope that, where I don't always feel I am making a difference on a daily basis in the office, the children I visit regularly would tell you differently.

Victoria Bentley

 $\boldsymbol{\heartsuit}$



SHICA

HIMANE

SHIZUOKA



Nichi-ei-Seminar Angela Harkness Robertson

The Nichiei Japan Day Seminar is an annual event held in autumn, organised by the Japan Local Government Centre in partnership with a UK local authority. The aim is to raise awareness of Japan and Japanese local government among UK local government officials and other interested bodies, as well as providing an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and information. The day consists of presentations, workshops and cultural demonstrations, through which areas of common interest are identified and discussed.



The 2003 Seminar was held on Friday 7th November, in Glasgow's beautiful Parish Hall. The theme for this year's event was "International Exchange at the City Level".

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The proceedings kicked off at 10:00 with a welcome from JLGC's Mr. Takeuchi, followed by an introduction to Japanese local government given by Director Akira Ando.

Next came our Keynote Speaker, Mr. George

τοκγο

Sneddon, Executive Director of Glasgow City Centre Vision. Mr. Sneddon's fascinating presentation covered the history and future of tourism in Glasgow, detailing the main aims and objectives of the city's tourism plan, as well as the implementation programme.

After a short coffee break, Mr. Ian Wall, Chief Executive of the EDI Group, gave a talk on his experiences during the 2003 Japan Study. Mrs Keiko Ando then explained the three different writing systems employed in Japanese language, and gave a brief demonstration of shodo, or Japanese calligraphy.

At 12:30, Mrs. Elizabeth Cameron, The Right Honourable The Lord Provost of Glasgow appeared to give a Civic Welcome Speech, in which she expressed a personal interest in Japan, as well as the desire to promote ties between Scotland and Japan. This was the first time in the history of the Nichiei Seminar that the JLGC had been given a Civic Reception, and we were delighted to receive this honour.

After a delicious buffet lunch, Ms Yoshie Asano entertained us with an entrancing performance of Japanese folk song and dance. Ms Asano explained the history of each dance and song she performed, most of which originated in the northern part of Japan. Ms Asano performs at cultural events around the UK, and can be contacted and booked for events on yoshie@onetel.net.uk

Next, JLGC's Angela Harkness Robertson gave a presentation on Doing Business with the Japanese. Drawing on ten years' experience of





living and working in Japan, she looked at the origins of some elements of Japanese culture and how these affect current business practise, before going on to give basic advice on communicating with Japanese people in a business environment.



The final slot of the day was a choice of two group discussions, both on the theme "Formal and Informal Relations Between Scotland and Japan". We invited four panellists from relevant organisations to head the discussions: Mr. Stephen Bishop, PR Officer of the British Kendo Association; Mr. Ian Harkness, Chairman of the Japan Society of Scotland; Ms Susan Lanham, Policy Officer, External Relations Unit, Edinburgh City Council (here talking about the formal twinning between Edinburgh and Kyoto); and Mr. Yushin Toda, Administrator, Europe-Japan Social Science Research Centre, University of Glasgow. The audience split into two groups, and joined either Mr. Bishop and Mr. Toda to talk about international exchange through sport and education, or Mr. Harkness and Ms Lanham to talk about international exchange through events and formal twinning. From the reporting session after the discussions, the overwhelming opinion was that all can benefit from international relations, and that we can





only succeed in achieving lasting friendships between countries if everyone pulls together; individuals, societies, groups, and public and private sector organisations all have something to contribute to forging and developing longterm, mutually beneficial ties.



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Glasgow City Council for its generous hospitality. Everyone from Glasgow involved in the organisation of the 2003 Japan Day Seminar were extremely helpful, friendly and professional, ensuring the event run smoothly and efficiently. Many thanks must also go to The Lord Provost of Glasgow for making time for us in her hectic schedule.

Similarly, we are grateful to all our speakers, performers and panellists, without whom the event could not have gone ahead.

We were helped enormously both during preparation and on the day by the Chairman of the Japan Society of Scotland, who set up a display stand and offered information on Japan and Japan-related events in Scotland. A number of Society members came along to the Seminar, joining Scottish government officers, business people, and academics for a useful and enjoyable day.

If you are interested in attending our 2004 *Nichiei Seminar*, hosting a future Japan Day, or would simply like to find out more, please contact Angela Harkness Robertson at the JLGC.



- Calligraphy lessons with Mrs Ando
- 2 Mrs Elizabeth Cameron with JLGC's Director Ando and Deputy Director Takeuchi
- 8 Ms Yoshie Asano
- Mr. George Sneddon, Keynote Speaker
- 6 Group Discussion
- 6 Mr. Ian Harkness with the Japan Society of Scotland stand

KAWASAKI

KITAKYUSHU

KOBE

STAFF INTERVIEW : MASAYUKI SUGINO

Assistant Director

The first name out of the hat for this issue's JLGC staff interview was Assistant Director Masayuki Sugino. Seconded from Ehime prefecture on Shikoku island in southern Japan, Mr. Sugino's research area is regeneration in the UK. He has spent almost two years in the UK, and will be returning to Ehime in April with his bride, Satoko.

When and why did you first become interested in politics?

a In my early teens, I was already rather keen on politics.

How did you end up at the JLGC?

a I wanted to work for a while for organisations other than

just for the local government to which I belong, because this kind of experience [such as at the JLGC] will give me a well-balanced, broader mind.

What are the best and worst things about your job?

a The best thing is my wonderful colleagues. The worst thing I've encountered so far was when I was obliged to call on 999 due to a false alarm in the office one evening, and a water truck from the armed forces was sent because of the fire fighters' strike.

What's the first thing you would change if you became Prime Minister?

a I would tackle the root problems of poverty. I would also prohibit karaoke if possible, simply because I've always hated it.

Is there any policy that you would "import" from Japanese local government? (If so, what is it?)

a I greatly admire the tendency to try out entirely new policies without hesitation or delay. Japanese politicians always discuss how to build up a detailed policy, but unfortunately it often takes so long that it becomes too late to implement.

What single thing would most improve your life?

a A tree on which money grows freely.

Who is your political hero and why?

Adm. Yonai_He was not successful in politics, but he was definitely a man of sound judgement.

You can invite any celebrity to dinner. Who is it, and why?

a The cast of "Fawlty Towers". They would undoubtedly entertain almost everyone.

What's your greatest achievement?

a I just got married, though I feel rather embarrassed to mention it in public.

What was your most embarrassing moment?

I took my satchel to primary school one day, but forgot to put anything in it. While I was calling my mother from the staff room, my teacher roared with laughter at such carelessness, saying ironically I could become an important figure in the future. (I'm still waiting for that moment!)

What is the biggest problem with local government today?

a There are so many problems that it's almost impossible to jot down a single one.

How would you solve it?

a If I could hit on to the solution, I wouldn't be where I am now.

You miss something that is widely available in Japan, but is impossible to get here. What is it?

a At this time of year, I miss the traditional Japanese hot springs terribly.

When and where are you most happy?

- **a** I probably feel most happy when I'm lazing around in bed on weekends.
- Your house is on fire. What possession do you grab first?

Personal documents.









KYOTO

ilgc staff

DOING BUSINESS apanese



New Book

Doing Business with the Japanese; a onestop guide to Japanese business practice Geoffrey Bownas, David Powers,

Christopher P Hood ISBN 0-9537465-1-8

Doing Business with the Japanese is part of a long-term project inspired by the JET Programme in 1997, when Professor Bownas was interviewing applicants for the programme. In response to concerns over what support would be offered to returnees, and how they would be able to develop skills learned in Japan upon return to the UK, he decided to produce a series of publications: "a package to end all packages on Japanese business."

As Professor Bownas puts it, "The book isn't just a 'do this, do that, don't do the other'; it's putting it into social context, and the context of change."

There are chapters not only on the here and now of the Japanese business world, but also on how that world is changing. It also provides analysis of Japan's problems and prospects, taking into consideration the emergence of recent trends, such as women being promoted to more senior positions, and the decline of the "jobs for life" mentality. Doing Business with the Japanese is immensely readable, not least because it has been written by 20 different people, from different fields, different age groups and different experiences; all of whom have spent a significant amount of time in Japan. The advice is sound, comes from experience, and covers just about everything anyone could ever need when contemplating doing business with a Japanese organisation, even for those who have spent time working with the Japanese.

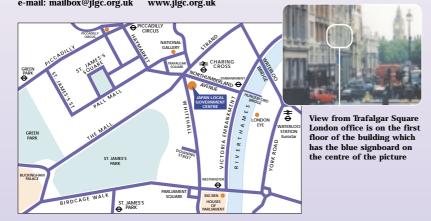
For further information, or to place an order, please e-mail wiesia.cook@direct-image.co.uk

> **SORRY!** It is very unfortunate that we must begin a new year with an apology to all our readers of The Annual Review.

> At the end of last year, we sent the publication to over 800 recipients, and were rather surprised to see a number of them returned to us, bearing "refused" stickers and surcharge notices. Further investigation revealed that there had been a disastrous mistake at the Great Portland Street Post Office in calculating the postage, which resulted in our Annual Review readers being asked to pay £1.26 for the privilege of receiving the normally free publication. JLGC and our friendly printers ABDA are currently in dispute over the matter with the Post Office, who are declining to accept any responsibility for the error. We'll keep you *posted* on any developments.

> In the meantime, we offer sincere apologies to all readers of The Annual Review, and would like to offer reimbursement to all those who had to pay for the delivery of the publication. Anyone wishing to make a claim should call either Sonya Harding or Angela Harkness Robertson at JLGC.

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The Japan Local Government Centre is the UK office of CLAIR - the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, and is a joint organisation representing local government in Japan's 47 prefectures and 12 major cities.

With its head office in Tokyo, and branch offices in each of the 59 local authorities' International Relations Divisions, CLAIR has 7 other overseas offices - in Beijing, New York, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, Sydney and the United Kingdom.