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STOP PRESS:

AUTHORITIES in Chinese province of Shaanxi today ordered more than 2,000 small fireworks makers to shut down, after fatal explosions at fireworks factories in China killed 46 people.

Trees go in mulch

OXFORDSHIRE residents are being asked to remember that their Christmas trees and cards can be recycled.

Recycling will be offered at all of Oxfordshire County Council's eight waste centres from this weekend.

The trees, which account for 9,000 tonnes of waste every year, can be added to green waste collections. They will then be turned into garden mulch and compost.

Householders are also reminded that a Christmas tree bought with roots on it can be planted outside.

Cyclists' survey highlights railway bridge blackspot

CYCLISTS surveyed by a campaign group have criticised Botley Road railway bridge, where two cyclists have died in recent years.

The Cycling Campaign for Oxford (Cyclox) carried out a sample survey along the Botley Road and concluded that cycling facilities there are wasted because the narrow road below the railway bridge is so dangerous and unpleasant that it actually discourages cycling.

Cyclox spokesman Simon Banks said: "This is contrary to the objectives of the county council and Cyclox, both of whom want to increase cycle use.

"Used by hundreds each winter morning, the inbound cycle route vanishes just yards from where it is most needed."

By contrast, the award-winning St Frideswide Bridge has won support among longer-distance cyclists who regularly use the Botley Road. Here,

Oxfordshire County Council has provided segregated cycle lanes and separate pedestrian bridges on either side of the road, which forms a key route into the city centre. The survey also found that cycling around central Oxford is more flexible and convenient than using buses.

The survey findings are to be handed over to the county transport planners in the hope of getting cycle routes around the Botley Road rail bridge redesigned.

Parents go to court over organs

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Mervyn Fudge said: "I think the main thing is the shock and horror of finding this has happened and the indignation that the NHS Litigation Authority will settle with one part of the country, but say the nationwide group can simply go away. They are just genuinely hurt that their deceased loved-ones, who were treated in the same way, just don't seem to count, and now there's anger."

An ORH spokesman said the trust could not comment because the court case was being overseen by the NHS Litigation Authority.

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