Oil Pipeline Made Safe for Centuries...



Lanes Group Case Study

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Lanes Group makes oil pipeline hidden beneath Welsh countryside safe for centuries

The industrial services division of Lanes Group has decommissioned a pipeline that once allowed crude oil to be pumped from North Wales more than 80 miles to one of the UK's main refineries.

Nearly 8 million litres of water and oil residue have been removed from two three-mile-long pipes in North Wales, while sections under roads have been filled with concrete.

The challenging project was needed to make the redundant buried pipeline safe, with a design life that stretches centuries into the future.



Pressure testing prepares pipeline for decommissioning

Project management specialist Arcadis appointed Lanes Group to decommission the two 40-inch internal diameter pipes, which were installed in the late 1960s and operational until the 1990s.

"Delivery of this decommissioning programme demonstrates the impressive scope of Lanes Group's service capabilities.

As the principal contractor, we had the capability to bring together a multi-disciplinary team of supply chain partners to deliver a project that has taken over two years to complete.

In all aspects of the project, including safe and sustainable delivery, rigorous cost control and stakeholder engagement, our team demonstrated exemplar standards."
Colin Mackay - Lanes Group Business Development Director



Delivering complex work

After months of planning, Our team launched the project's operational phase in July 2023 by pressure testing both pipes with nitrogen.

This led to one of the pipes being excavated to a depth of four metres so a weld cap could be fitted. The pipe was tested again, and approved for dewatering.

The water removal, treatment and disposal process was carried out during July and August 2025, first for one pipe, then the second.



Reinforcing for the Future

Lanes Group's team continuously monitored the treatment process, regularly sending water samples to be laboratory tested, in accordance with Welsh Water requirements. The water company also carried out its own testing.

A total of 7.7 million litres of water were treated and disposed of. Around 10 tonnes of waste material left by the process was taken to a specialist waste site for safe disposal.

In the final phase of the decommissioning programme, completed at the end of October 2025, work has been done to reinforce the pipes at five road crossings.

The completed works have made the redundant pipeline safe for future generations, with reinforced sections at road crossings designed to last up to 600 years. The project leaves a lasting legacy of safe infrastructure and environmental protection.