



What happened?

- During a weekly vantage point survey, a sinkhole was noted
- The sinkhole was formed due to an abandoned mine shaft re-opening
- An adjacent gas pipeline was unaffected

Findings and key learning points

- A pipeline operative noted the appearance of a sinkhole during a routine weekly vantage point survey
- The pipeline operator carried out investigations and established that a capped disused mine shaft had collapsed and re-opened. The appropriate agencies and landowner were informed. A fence was erected around the hole.
- An aerial survey was undertaken to confirm the exact location. An adjacent gas pipeline 33 metres away was unaffected.
- The presence of the mineshaft was known when the pipeline was constructed so the route was selected accordingly
- The operator carried out a geophysical survey of the pipeline to ensure that there had been no subsidence or settlement caused by ground movement or underground water

Recommendation

- Operators should be aware that capped abandoned mine shafts may re-open and should consider including these on surveillance lists