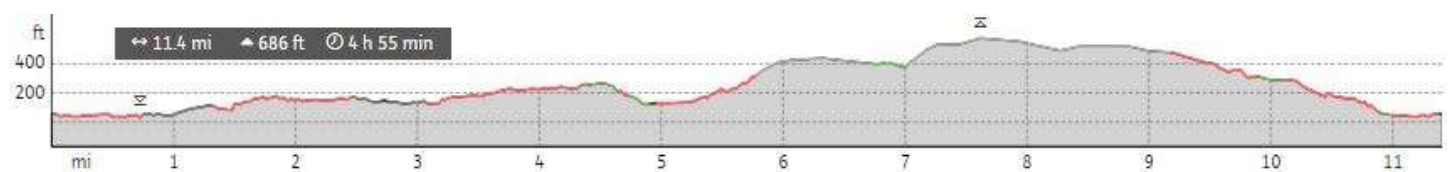


The **Red Kite Trail** meanders through the beautiful Derwent valley and is ideal red kite country with a mixture of mature woodlands, wetlands and open countryside. The 11-mile (with 686ft of ascent) **RED** walk should provide many opportunities to see red kites and a variety of other wildlife as well as passing through areas of important historical and heritage interest.





The route is marked in both directions by Red Kite Trail way-markers with arrows indicating the recommended Trail direction. The lower Derwent Valley has a varied and interesting past of which some evidence remains. Much of the valley has been dominated by the mining industry often in the form of drift mines. This industry was supported by the construction of the Derwent Valley railway taking coal from collieries further up the valley down to the staithes on the River Tyne. The line opened in 1867 and carried up to half a million passengers until it closed in 1962. The railway crossed the River Derwent on several bridges, or viaducts, of which one of the most magnificent is the Nine Arches Viaduct. This is now a central feature of the Derwent Walk Country Park. One of the valley's other defining features is the forty metre tall '*Column of Liberty*' on the Gibside Estate. This was the ancestral home of the Bowes Lyons family built by George Bowes in 1750. Kites can be seen anywhere along the route however, key '*Red Kite View Points*' are identified where superb views of the valley can provide the ideal vantage point for watching kites. Opportunities to view some well-known features of Tyneside, the Tyne Bridge, the Millennium Pedestrian & Cyclist Bridge and SAGE Gateshead, are available on clear days from the Trail's higher reaches.