

## Building dementia-friendly communities

# Raising awareness of dementia in Rotorua

Affinity is an interactive light sculpture depicting the brain and the effects of dementia. When touched, the orbs light up representing messages between neurons, and sounds play to share stories of people affected by dementia.

Rotorua Lakes Council heard of Affinity and sought sponsors to support bringing the installation to Rotorua.

Here are some tips that could be useful for other dementia awareness events:

- 1. Something different:** The sculpture is intriguing; it's a different way to engage people.
- 2. Timing:** We chose a three week period over Easter. A popular time for locals and tourists to be in Rotorua.
- 3. Relevant:** We included stories of local people affected by dementia.
- 4. Volunteers:** Steering group members and other networks were asked to help.
- 5. Accessibility:** We chose a well known central location in Rotorua - where the Christmas tree normally goes.
- 6. Promotion:** We advertised in Rotorua and the surrounding regions, working with the local media.



Photos: Altitude Photography

**“We were just passing by and had to stop – it’s amazing. Hearing the stories of local people affected by dementia was so moving”**

Linda, Rotorua resident

**“The installation, offers the public the opportunity to discover, learn and enjoy. It is a great educational opportunity for young and old.”**

Mandy Godo – Rotorua Lakes Council

Affinity was created by Amigo and Amigo and S1T2. These companies focus on creating artworks, which are interactive and experimental. They aim to create a sense of wonder and beauty, while at the same time, communicating various social issues.

### You can help to build a dementia-friendly community

Make a dementia commitment and learn more about dementia:  
[bupa.co.nz/dementiacommitment](https://bupa.co.nz/dementiacommitment)

To find out more about building a dementia-friendly Rotorua visit:  
[rotorualakescouncil.nz/dementiafriendlyrotorua](https://rotorualakescouncil.nz/dementiafriendlyrotorua)