



# LIFT App in the Community: Music at Mycenae House Reach Out Project

## Overview of Case Study

The **LIFT App** is a gesture-controlled music platform designed to make music creation accessible for individuals with physical or cognitive impairments. Using simple gestures and movements, participants can engage in meaningful musical expression without needing musical instruments or fine motor control.

This case study explores the use of LIFT as part of the **Reach Out Project at Mycenae House**, a community centre in Greenwich supporting older adults and those living with mobility or memory challenges. The project aims to reduce isolation and promote wellbeing through creative, social engagement.

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## Background: Why LIFT?

Music is a powerful tool for connection, memory, and mood regulation—particularly in community and wellbeing settings. Traditional instruments and music tech often rely on fine motor skills or technical know-how, which can exclude older adults, disabled users, or anyone without formal musical training. LIFT offers a more accessible path to music-making, improvisation, and its powerful therapeutic benefits.

### LIFT bridges this gap by offering:

- Gesture-based music control using gestures and body movement
- Easy setup with minimal equipment
- No need for verbal or touch-based interaction
- Flexible use: solo or group, seated or standing or lying down (bedbound)

The app encourages movement, group participation, focus and a sense of agency, offering control over music creation and improvisation which has long established therapeutic benefits, making it ideal for inclusive community settings.

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## Trial Context: Mycenae House – Reach Out Project

**When:** Weekly sessions

**Where:** Mycenae House Community Centre

**Who:** Adults and their Carers participating in the Outreach Project

**Session Type:** Group-led with spontaneous individual participation

### Setup:

- iPad on stand
  - Bluetooth speaker for shared sound or headphones
  - Participants and audience join the sessions, encouraging social interaction
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## Key Observations

### Engagement and Participation

Three regular participants, for the purposes of this case study, initially used LIFT for just 1–2 minutes at a time. Over several weeks, their engagement has steadily increased—both in duration and enthusiasm. They now regularly use the app for longer periods, multiple times during the 3 hour session. These three regular participants often lead by example.

These participants have become **advocates for LIFT**, encouraging others to join in. Their excitement is infectious with others in the group who clap along, cheer, and even take turns. What started as individual play has grown into a **communal, interactive experience**.

Some attendees who initially stayed on the sidelines now come specifically to be part of the LIFT sessions each week.

### Group Dynamics

Although LIFT can be for individual use, this often turns into a group activity. Participants take turns using the app while others support by watching, clapping, and offering encouragement. This spontaneous teamwork enhances the social and emotional impact of the session. We're building on this dynamic by sharing videos on YouTube and directly with participants, helping to celebrate their creativity, strengthen community bonds, and inspire others to join in.

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## Carer and Staff Feedback

Carers and facilitators have noted **increased physical movement** among participants during LIFT sessions, including increased movement and height of raised arms, swaying, dancing with some participants exceeding their normally reduced range of movement. There's also been a noticeable boost in **mood, alertness, and social interaction**.

Staff have commented on the app's simplicity and adaptability, highlighting its ability to make music-making **accessible, enjoyable, and dignified** for all participants.

This is a quote from Deborah Fitzpatrick who runs the The Reach Out Project at Mycenae House:

'It's truly inspiring to witness The Reach Out Project's community members actively participating in the development of this remarkable app. The way LIFT analyses hand gestures and body movements to create music is captivating. Participants are not just passively listening, they are physically connected to the music, shaping its creation in real-time. Beyond musical expression, an unexpected benefit has emerged to increase physical movement through the joy of music. LIFT offers a valuable resource for carers, by providing accessible and engaging activities, it empowers individuals to take greater control and to explore new interests.'

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## Barriers Addressed by LIFT

Traditional Challenges	How LIFT Helps
Complex technology	Simple, intuitive app on tablet or phone
Limited mobility	Responds to broad or subtle movements
Low confidence	Encourages success through instant feedback
Isolation	Promotes shared activity and interaction

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## Key Takeaways

- LIFT fosters **inclusive participation** and **encourages movement**.
  - Regular users often become **peer leaders**, motivating others.
  - Even short interactions grow into **longer, more confident use** over time.
  - LIFT helps transform passive groups into **engaged, collaborative communities**.
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## Next Steps

- Expand use of LIFT across more community sessions
  - Train volunteers and carers to support LIFT facilitation
  - Capture stories and data on long-term impact on wellbeing and mobility
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## Contact

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