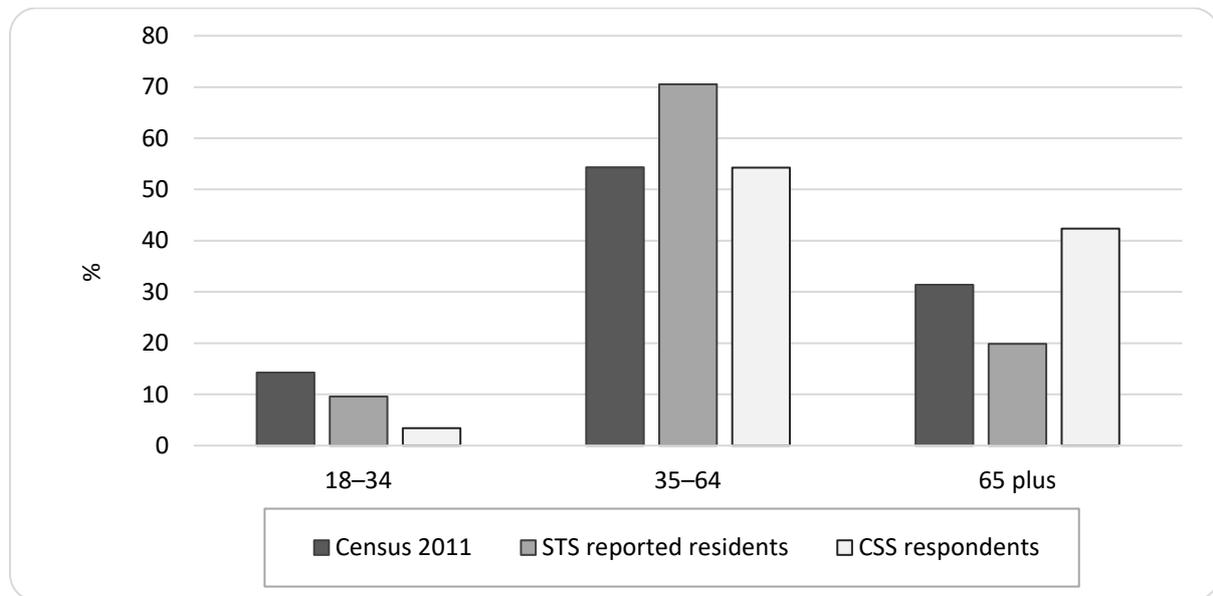


## A5.6 Community Sociolinguistic Survey: Grimsay

This section discusses the disaggregated sociolinguistic survey findings for Grimsay.

### A5.6.1 Background data

Figure A5.22 compares the percentage of respondents for the various age cohorts in the 2011 Census for North Uist (south and east), the Speaker Typology Survey (STS, see Chapter 6) and the Community Sociolinguistic Survey (CSS, see Chapter 5).



**Figure A5.22** Percentage age profile of 2011 Census (North Uist), of reported residents in STS and CSS, Grimsay (Ns = 554, 146, 59)

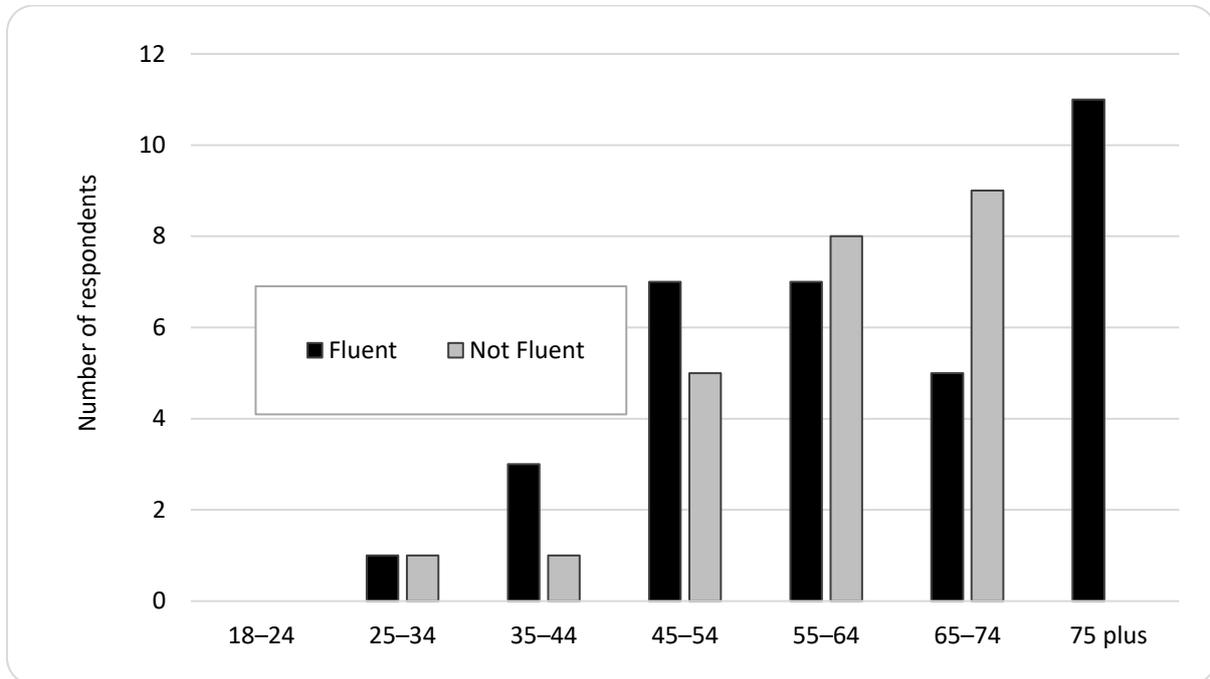
The youngest cohorts are notably low in the Census and even lower in our samples, particularly in the Community Sociolinguistic Survey. This is in keeping with the elderly bias in the respondent groups in the small district surveys in general.

There is a greater proportional rate to the CSS among the over-65 age group than in the Census (42.4% in the CSS compared to 31.4% for the Census), and a greater sample proportion in the 18–34 age cohort in the 2011 Census compared to the community survey (14.3% against 3.4% for the CSS, although the STS noted 9.6%).

Proportions for the 35–64 age group are virtually identical: 54.3% in the Census and 54.2% in the CSS but there are more in that age group in the STS at 70.5%.

*A5.6.1.1 Gaelic ability by age*

Figure A5.23 displays a cross-reference for ability in spoken Gaelic by age group for respondents in Grimsay.



**Figure A5.23** Gaelic ability by age group, Grimsay (N = 58)

Table A5.5 below pertains to the key data on Gaelic ability by age group in Grimsay.

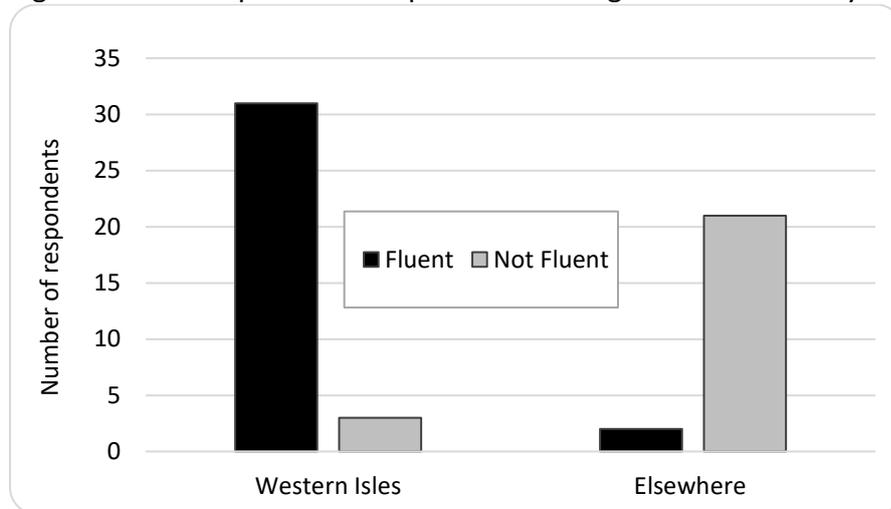
Number of respondents	Fluent	Not Fluent
18-24	0	0
25-34	1	1
35-44	3	1
45-54	7	5
55-64	7	8
65-74	5	9
75 plus	11	0
Total	34	24

**Table A5.5** Gaelic ability by age group, Grimsay (N = 58)

The data depict a situation, in comparison with Scalpay, of greater equity between fluent and non-fluent respondents in all age groups, except for those over 75 who all report as being fluent in Gaelic.

### A5.6.2 Respondent background and Gaelic fluency, Grimsay

Figure A5.24 compares the respondents' background and fluency in Gaelic.

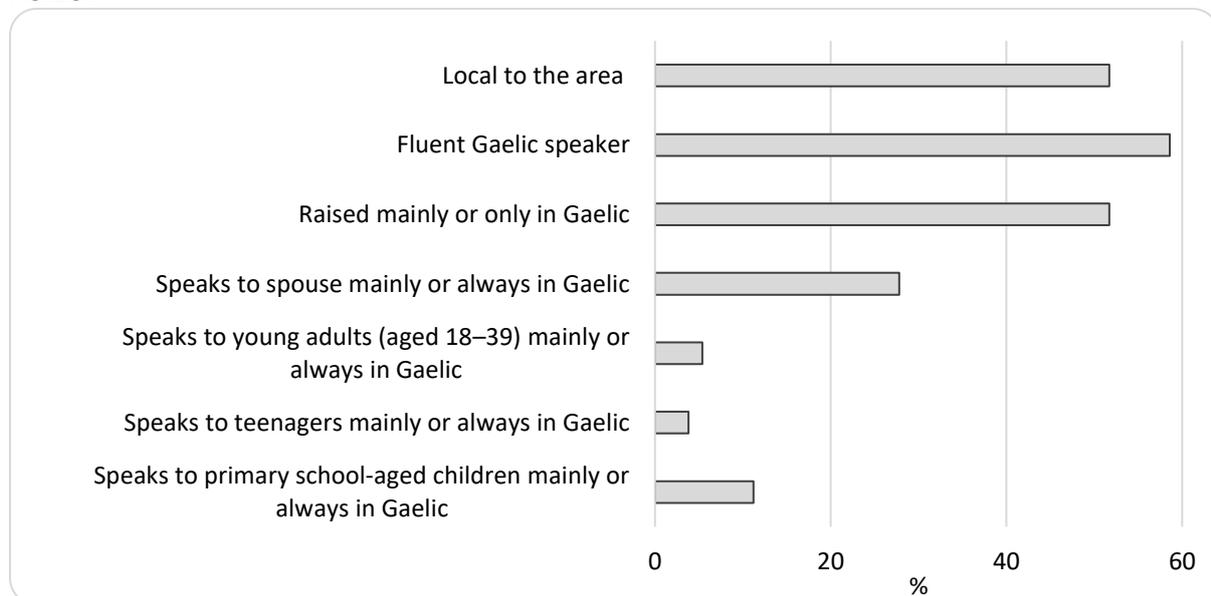


**Figure A5.24** Respondents' background and Gaelic fluency, Grimsay (N = 57)

As with Scalpay (A5.5.2), and as is evident in the all districts comparison in Section 5.4, there is a clear link between Gaelic fluency and a local origin. 91.2% of respondents who hail from the Western Isles are fluent Gaelic speakers, while just 8.7% (2 speakers) of respondents from elsewhere are fluent. Overall, 57.9% of respondents in Grimsay self-report as fluent speakers of Gaelic.

### A5.6.3 Linguistic background and Gaelic use, Grimsay

The linguistic background of respondents and their Gaelic fluency and use is given in figure A5.25.



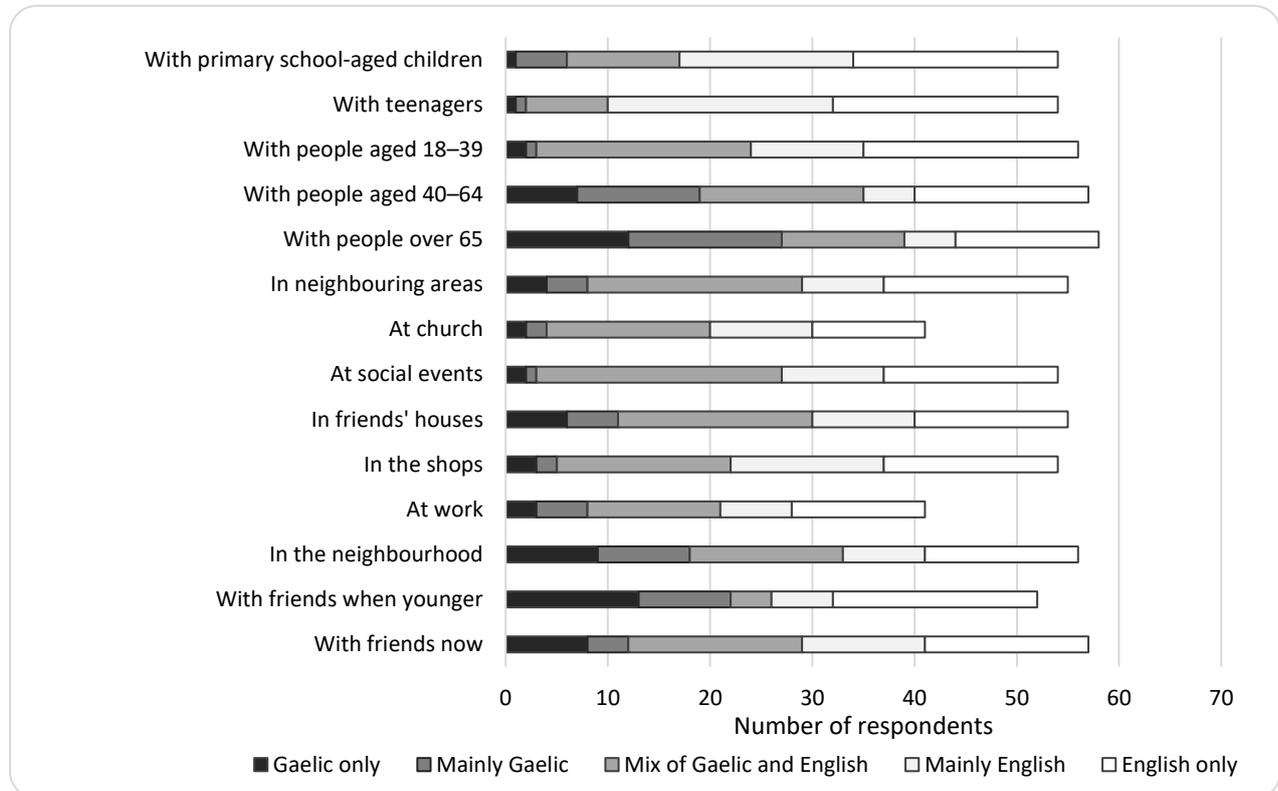
**Figure A5.25** Respondents' linguistic background and their Gaelic use, Grimsay (N = 58)

It is in contemporary practice of Gaelic with the younger cohorts that the language's communal weaknesses are clearly evident: only 5.4% of respondents *Speak to young adults mainly or always in Gaelic*, and even fewer to teenagers (3.8%). Although a greater percentage (11.2%) *Speaks to primary school-aged children mainly or always in Gaelic*.

These comparisons indicate the low level of Gaelic practice across generations and highlight the trend of loss of Gaelic.

#### A5.6.4 Language use in different social situations, Grimsay

Figure A5.26 displays the respondents' language use in different social situations in Grimsay.



**Figure A5.26** Language used by respondents in a variety of social situations, Grimsay (N = 57)

Social use of Gaelic (in particular *Gaelic only*) is much weaker than in Scalpay. The most common *Gaelic only* response to this language practice enquiry relates to use *With friends when younger* (24.1%) and *With people over 65* currently (20.7%, with an additional 25.9% claiming to use *Mainly Gaelic*). The data on social practice of Gaelic as the main language indicate marginal use of Gaelic everywhere, especially in shops, work, worship and general social interactions.

The preponderance of Gaelic mixing correlates with the preponderance of English use (in comparison with Scalpay). It can be interpreted as a stage closer to a full shift to English, although current use of *English only* when speaking to friends has decreased. This is especially clear in the responses relating to the use of Gaelic with friends in the contemporary setting as opposed to when respondents were younger.

### A5.6.5 Identity of Gael in Grimsay

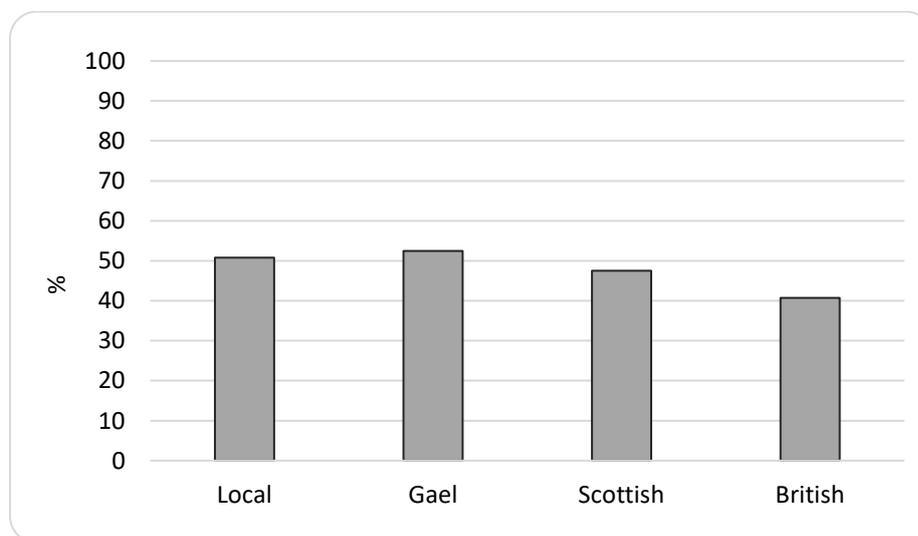
The next section of the questionnaire asked about identity.

#### A5.6.5.1 Do you consider yourself to be a Gael?, Grimsay

Two-thirds of Grimsay respondents considered themselves to be Gaels, which is proportionally higher than the figure of 57.9% of respondents self-reporting as fluent Gaelic speakers (see A5.6.2). This may indicate that Gaelic identity is not necessarily linked to Gaelic fluency/competency for all Grimsay respondents. 26% said they were not Gaels, with 7% feeling the question did not apply to them.

#### A5.6.5.2 How would you describe your identity?, Grimsay

Grimsay respondents were also asked to describe their own identity: *Local*, *Gael*, *Scottish* and/or *British*, as appropriate. The percentage results are displayed in Figure A5.27.



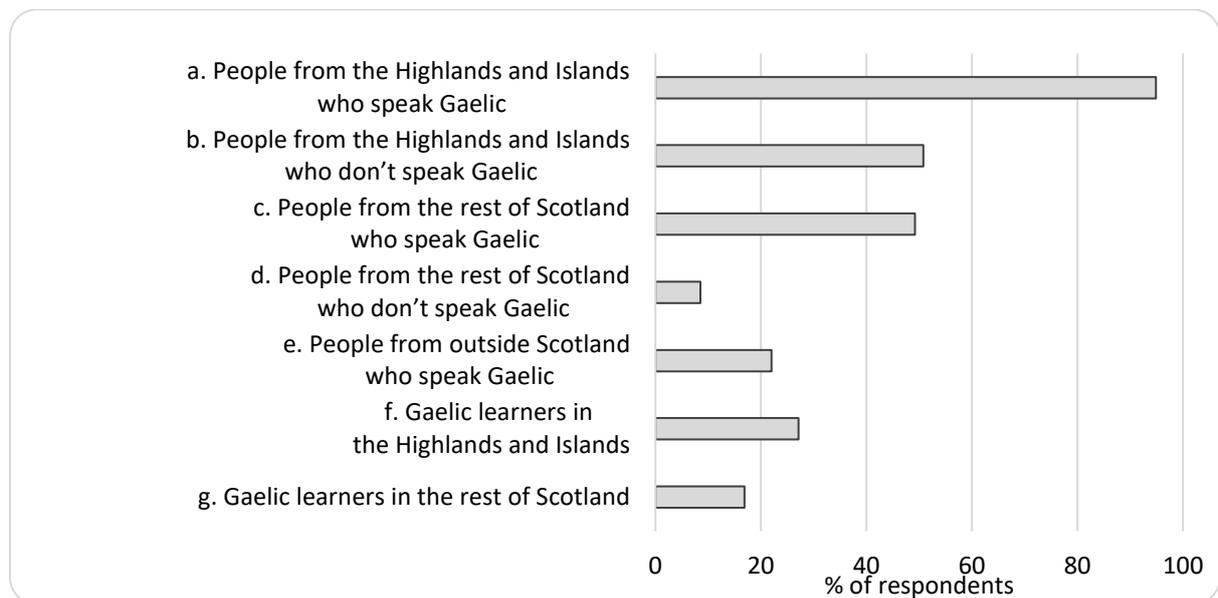
**Figure A5.27** Respondents' multiple choice identity, Grimsay (N = 57)

Identity as *Gael* was the most common (52.5%), followed by *Local* and *Scottish* at 50.8% and 47.5% respectively. A smaller proportion again, 40.7% of respondents in Grimsay, opted for the *British* self-ascription. The lower range of percentages expressed for all possible identities, in contrast with Scalpay (70%–84%), suggests that the Grimsay respondents do not adhere to multiple identities to the same degree. Ten respondents report that they consider themselves to be both a *Gael* and *Local*, and nothing else (an identity combination not found among Scalpay or Eriskay respondents). Eight respondents indicate that they hold all four identities, a much lower return than in Scalpay.

Suggesting that there is less nesting and more dichotomy, the categories of *Gael* only (five respondents), *Scottish* only (seven respondents) and British only (seven respondents) record higher values than in the other two Study Districts. It is only on Grimsay that the combination of Gael and British is found (two respondents).

### A5.6.5.3 People considered to be Gaels, Grimsay

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree as to whether they considered certain people to be Gaels. Figure A5.28 gives the percentage results.



**Figure A5.28** People considered as Gaels, various categorisations, Grimsay (N = 58)

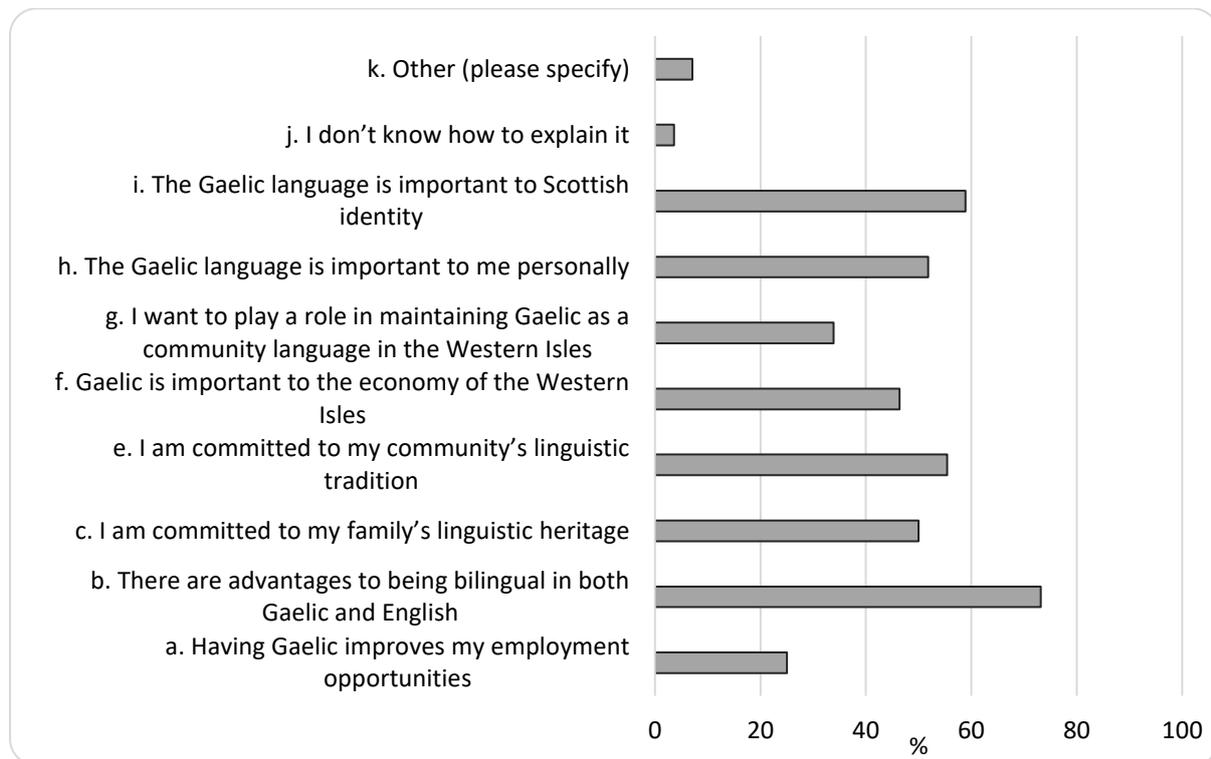
As in Scalpay, the greatest level of agreement (95%) was with the statement that *People from the Highlands and Islands who speak Gaelic are Gaels*, followed by *People from the Highlands and Islands who don't speak Gaelic* (51%), suggesting the importance of place for this ascription. *People from the rest of Scotland who speak Gaelic* were seen as *Gaels* by just under half of respondents (49%). The lowest agreement rates were for *Gaelic learners in the rest of Scotland* and, in particular, non-Gaelic speakers from elsewhere in Scotland. The low levels of Gaelic ascription for these options offer another perspective which is in keeping with perceptions in the community that the concept of the *Gael* is closely associated with issues of language and place.

### A5.6.6 In favour of Gaelic, Grimsay

Although lower than in Scalpay (see A5.5.6), Grimsay also yielded a high rate of favourable responses towards Gaelic. 33 respondents (55.9%) were *Strongly in favour* and 23 respondents (39%) were *In favour*, with three respondents (5.1%) choosing to indicate a position that was neither favourable nor unfavourable to the language.

Among the respondents who indicated that they were in favour of Gaelic, reactions were sought to attitudinal statements in a multiple-response format. They were asked to agree, or not, with statements relating to why they were in favour of Gaelic.

The percentage results are presented in Figure A5.29 in the same order as for Scalpay (Figure A5.18).



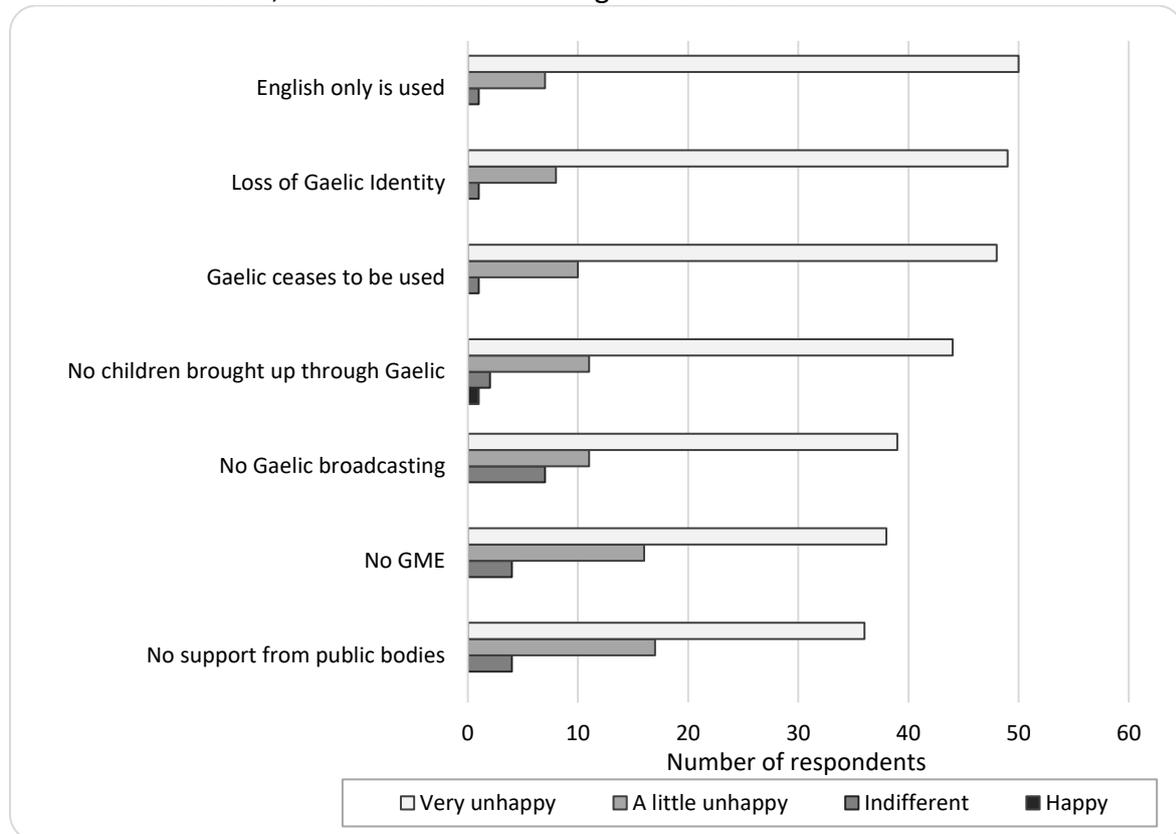
**Figure A5.29** Responses to the multi-choice question 'If you are in favour of Gaelic, why is this?' Grimsay (N = 56)

As with Scalpay's results, the statement concerning the advantages of bilingualism (73%) attracts the most agreement. In the case of the defined statements, the lowest-ranked response related to Gaelic improving employment opportunities (25%), again mirroring the Scalpay responses. This may reflect the older age profile of the respondents, wherein employability is unlikely to impact on older respondents' future. The second least-popular statement was *To play a role in maintaining Gaelic as a community language*, attracting 34% agreement.

It is notable that the statement concerning Gaelic's role as an economic driver (46%) scored relatively low with respondents. The second most popular statement was that *Gaelic is important to Scottish identity* (59%). The scale of percentage rate for reasons of being in favour of Gaelic are considerably lower than in Scalpay (Figure A5.16); that is, those who indicate that they are in favour of Gaelic in Grimsay do not give a high rate of concrete reasons for that favourability.

### A5.6.7 Feelings about possible negative outcomes for Gaelic, Grimsay

The survey also asked respondents to express their feelings about possible negative outcomes for Gaelic, with results shown in Figure A5.30.



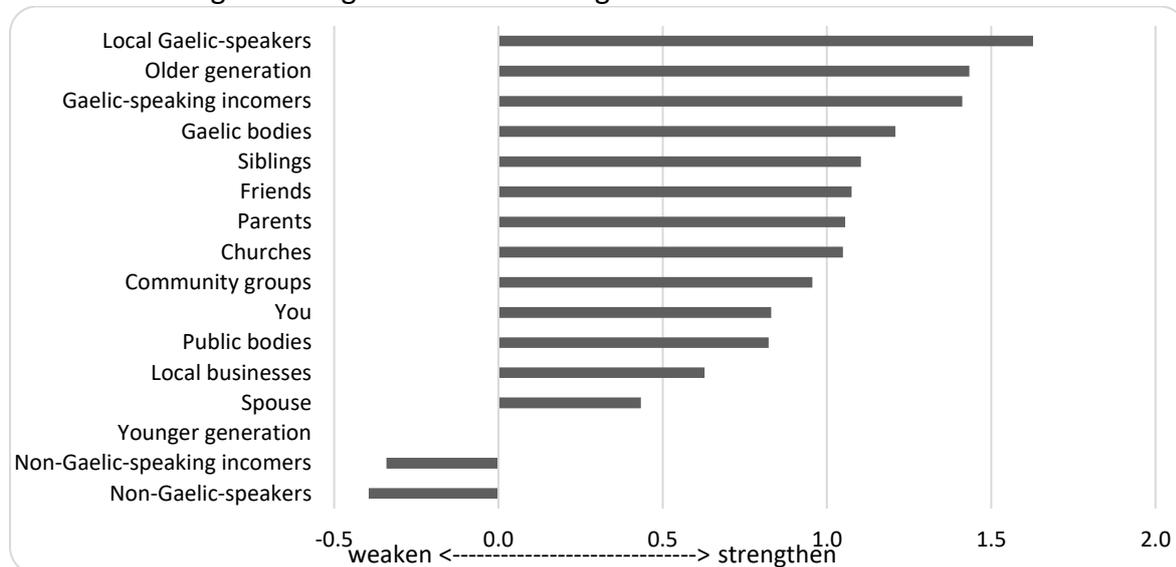
**Figure A5.30** Happiness or otherwise concerning negative outcomes which could affect the future of Gaelic, Grimsay (N = 59)

Similar to the Scalpay findings, the statements which left respondents feeling *Very unhappy* at such future prospects were ones which express anxiety about the future social demise of Gaelic – the area suffering a *Loss of Gaelic identity* (84.5%), *English only* being spoken (86.2%), *Gaelic ceases to be used* (81.4%) – rather than those statements linked to provision and institutional involvement (*No GME*, *No Gaelic broadcasting*, *No support from public bodies*). A high proportion of Grimsay respondents (75.9%) also indicated that they would be *Very unhappy* if no children were brought up through Gaelic in the future.

### A5.6.8 Individuals and groups felt to strengthen or weaken Gaelic, Grimsay

Respondents were then asked to assess to what extent different groups or individuals impacted on the strength of Gaelic in the community.

The results are given in Figure A5.31 in average scores.



**Figure A5.31** Average score values relating to whether respondents felt that the individuals or groups strengthened or weakened Gaelic, Grimsay (N = 53)

The results are similar to Scalpay, with *Local Gaelic speakers* (1.6) and the *Older generation* (1.4) scoring more highly for positive effect on Gaelic. *Gaelic bodies* (1.2) scored higher in Grimsay than in Scalpay, but the lowest-ranked groups were considered to be the *Younger generation* (0.0), *Non-Gaelic-speaking incomers* (-0.3) and *Non-Gaelic speakers* (-0.4). Both negatively categorised non-Gaelic speaking groups are considerably less negatively scored than in Scalpay.

This may be an acceptance in Grimsay of the reality of the higher proportion of English speakers in Grimsay, compared to Scalpay, and ironically the actually greater negative impact of English speaking on Gaelic speaking in Grimsay.

### A5.6.9 Social initiatives for Gaelic, Grimsay

Respondents were asked to rank their levels of agreement with a range of statements about a number of possible initiatives/commitments in support of Gaelic. Table A5.6 shows the results.

Response to statements, Grimsay CSS	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
Fluent Gaelic-speaking parents should raise their children in Gaelic	42.4	40.7	15.3	1.7	
Gaelic classes should be provided for anyone living in the Gaelic areas of the Western Isles	40.7	49.2	8.5	1.7	
Economic development that would support the Gaelic language in the Western Isles should be encouraged	29.3	51.7	17.2	1.7	
Community groups should be enabled to conduct their activities through Gaelic	17.5	35.1	35.1	12.3	
Every public servant working in the Gaelic communities of the Western Isles should speak Gaelic	17.2	19.0	29.3	15.5	19.0
Everyone living in the Gaelic communities of the Western Isles should have good Gaelic	10.2	25.4	18.6	25.4	20.3
All schoolteachers in the area should teach through Gaelic-medium	8.8	14.0	24.6	29.8	22.8
Youth clubs, etc., should be run through Gaelic only	3.6	10.7	28.6	32.1	25.0

**Table A5.6** Respondents' level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about Gaelic, Grimsay (Ns = 59, 59, 58, 57, 58, 59, 57, 56)

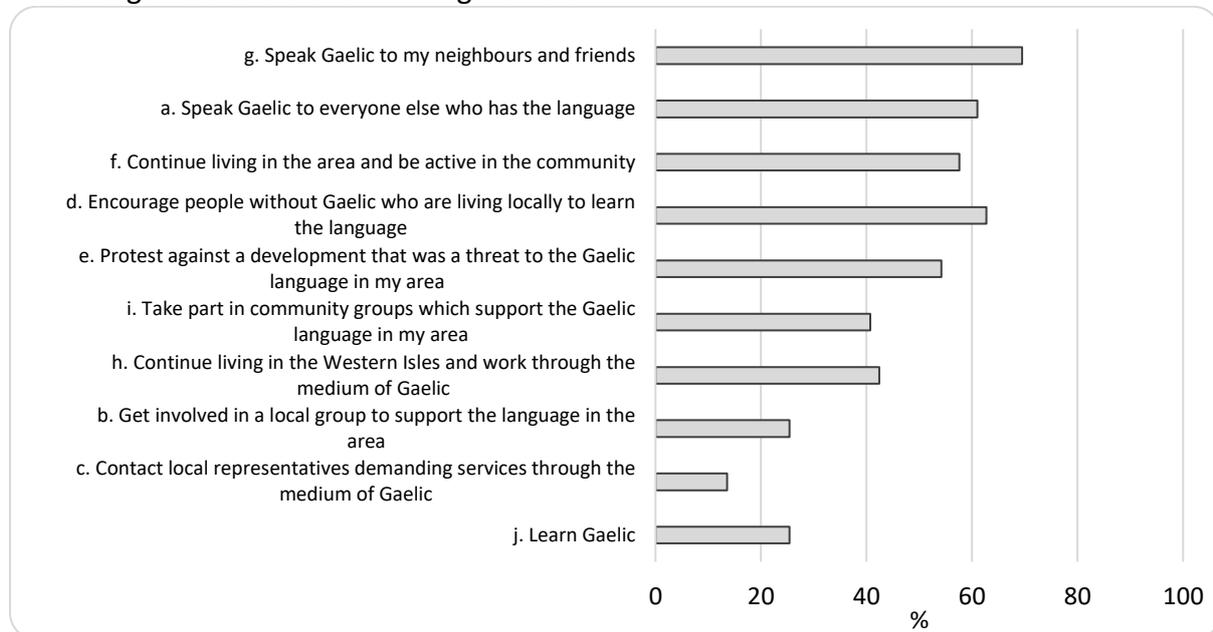
Similar to Scalpay, the youth club statement elicits the strongest disagreement, reflecting the precarious position of Gaelic currently in the community, and the very limited practice of Gaelic among the younger age cohorts. The level of disagreement (57.1% *Disagree/Strongly disagree*) with the statement that *Youth clubs, etc., should be run through Gaelic only* is considerably higher in Grimsay than in Scalpay (39%). This follows the pattern of Scalpay being more favourable to Gaelic in general.

Fewer respondents in the Grimsay CSS *Strongly agree*, however, with the statement *Fluent Gaelic-speaking parents should raise their children in Gaelic* (42.2%) than in Scalpay (75.7%). As seen in the cross-generational data (Figure A5.25), only 11.2% of respondents in Grimsay stated that they speak *Mainly or Always in Gaelic* to primary school-aged children, and this percentage falls to 3.8% with teenagers.

A5.6.10 What would you personally be willing to do to ensure that the Western Isles remains a Gaelic-speaking area, Grimsay

In relation to envisaged personal commitments to support Gaelic, Grimsay respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements.

Percentage results are shown in Figure A5.32.



**Figure A5.32** Percentage responses to the multi-choice question 'What would you personally be willing to do to ensure that the Western Isles remains a Gaelic-speaking area?', Grimsay (N = 58)

Although at a lower rate than Scalpay, the statements which mostly drew agreement in Grimsay were similar to Scalpay, i.e. those associated with less formal, communal interactions: *Speak Gaelic to my neighbours and friends* (69.5%) or *Encourage people without Gaelic who are living locally to learn the language* (62.7%).

It is apparent that there is a lack of desire to engage actively with suggested initiatives which may involve greater levels of personal investment and potential conflict; three of the four lowest-ranked statements were to *Take part in community groups which support the Gaelic language in my area* (40.7%), *Get involved in a local group to support the language in the area* (25.4%), or to *Contact local representatives demanding services through the medium of Gaelic* (13.6%). A quarter of respondents would be willing to *Learn Gaelic* (i.e. roughly half the non-Gaelic speakers, Figure A5.23), suggesting untapped support for the language which is not currently catered for.

In Scalpay also, a quarter of respondents would be willing to *Learn Gaelic*. Since the non-Gaelic speakers represent a third of the Scalpay sample (Figure A5.12), one quarter of the total for Scalpay is a greater proportion of the non-Gaelic speaking cohort than Grimsay.