

## Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

### Plant distribution survey

#### Introduction

Home Covert is a woodland planted around 250 years ago, within the Moreton Hall part of Bury St Edmunds. It is situated at approximately OS grid reference TL874654. Home Covert is owned by St Edmundsbury Borough Council, with management as a community woodland by Woodland Ways. There is one path through the wood. In the north-west corner are two craters, believed to have been caused when a Flying Fortress aircraft crashed in January 1945.

#### Methodology

On 10th May 2015, members of Woodland Ways were shown, as a training exercise, examples of some species found in Home Covert, specifically

- Lords and Ladies *Arum maculatum*
- Garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata*
- Cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*
- Wood avens *Geum urbanum*
- Dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*
- Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*

In addition it was considered that members were able to recognise the following species without training

- Holly *Ilex aquilifolium*
- Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*
- Horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*
- Willow *Salix* sp
- Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*
- Stinging nettle *Urtica dioica*

Members were given a plan of Home Covert and asked to plot the location of a small number of species each, working in pairs where possible. Nick Sibbett, a competent botanist, was available during the survey, to advise on identification and mapping, where necessary. The survey took around one hour in good weather.

It is considered that the species locations were mapped indicatively rather than precisely. Wood sedge *Carex sylvatica* was also a target species. Other species of tree, shrub and herb were also present but not surveyed.

The Woodland Ways members carrying out surveys were

Nick Sibbett

Jane Sibbett

Brenda Cartwright

Gerald Cartwright

Jane Starling

Claire Reid

Mike Hollins

Jenny Green

Gillian Miller

Janet Scorer

Julie Wordley

Maria Darby

## Results

The locations of plants seen are shown on the attached plans. The most species-rich part of the wood appears to be alongside the path, with a greater number of species recorded here rather than anywhere else. It is considered that this is accurate, rather than reflecting surveyor bias towards recording beside the path. Away from the path, where the woodland floor was shady, there was a dominance of dog's mercury and fewer other species.

Although the plant mapping was indicative, with limitations of survey time restricted to 1 - 1.5 hours, and surveyor inexperience, it can be used to compare with a similar survey in 2009 to identify any significant changes which occurred over the intervening 6 years in the woodland flora.

## Changes from 2009 - 2015

Species	Observable change
Lords and Ladies	Wider distribution in 2015; found now but not in 2009 around craters and behind cafe. Increases in spread in areas where it was previously found.
Garlic mustard	There was a small shift in distribution from being to the east of the big crater in 2009, but within the crater edge and west of the craters in 2015. Other distribution remained unchanged but possibly a small spread in the central part of the wood.
Cow parsley	Mainly distributed alongside the path in both surveys, but a big increase in the south of the wood in 2015. An easterly shift also occurred in the crater area
Dog's mercury	Abundant and widespread in both surveys
Wood sedge	Just found in one small spot in 2009 but absent there and not seen elsewhere in 2015.
Wood avens	Growing alongside the path in both surveys, probably more abundant in 2015.
ash	Probably a reasonably similar distribution in both surveys; however some dead trees were seen in 2015 and suspected Chalara ash disease also seen in 2015.
hawthorn	Probably a reasonably similar distribution in both surveys
holly	Most was recorded in the 2009 survey in the middle and northern half of the wood, but in 2015 it was mostly recorded in the south of the wood.

	Holly is long-lived and there has been no programme of holly removal or planting, so this change is suspected to be due to variation between recorders.
Sycamore	Not resurveyed in 2015 but unlikely to have changed much - widespread and abundant across the wood.
Horse chestnut	No clear change from 2009 to 2015; a few more trees recognised as horse chestnut in 2015 but with no planting or obvious regeneration in the meantime
willow	Three trees by the small crater, recorded in both years
bramble	In 2009 bramble was found within five distinct patches in the south east of the wood, by 2015 there were more but smaller patches and those patches nearer the centre of the wood had been lost.
Nettle	Widespread in both survey years

Nick Sibbett  
Chair, Woodland Ways  
22nd June 2015

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

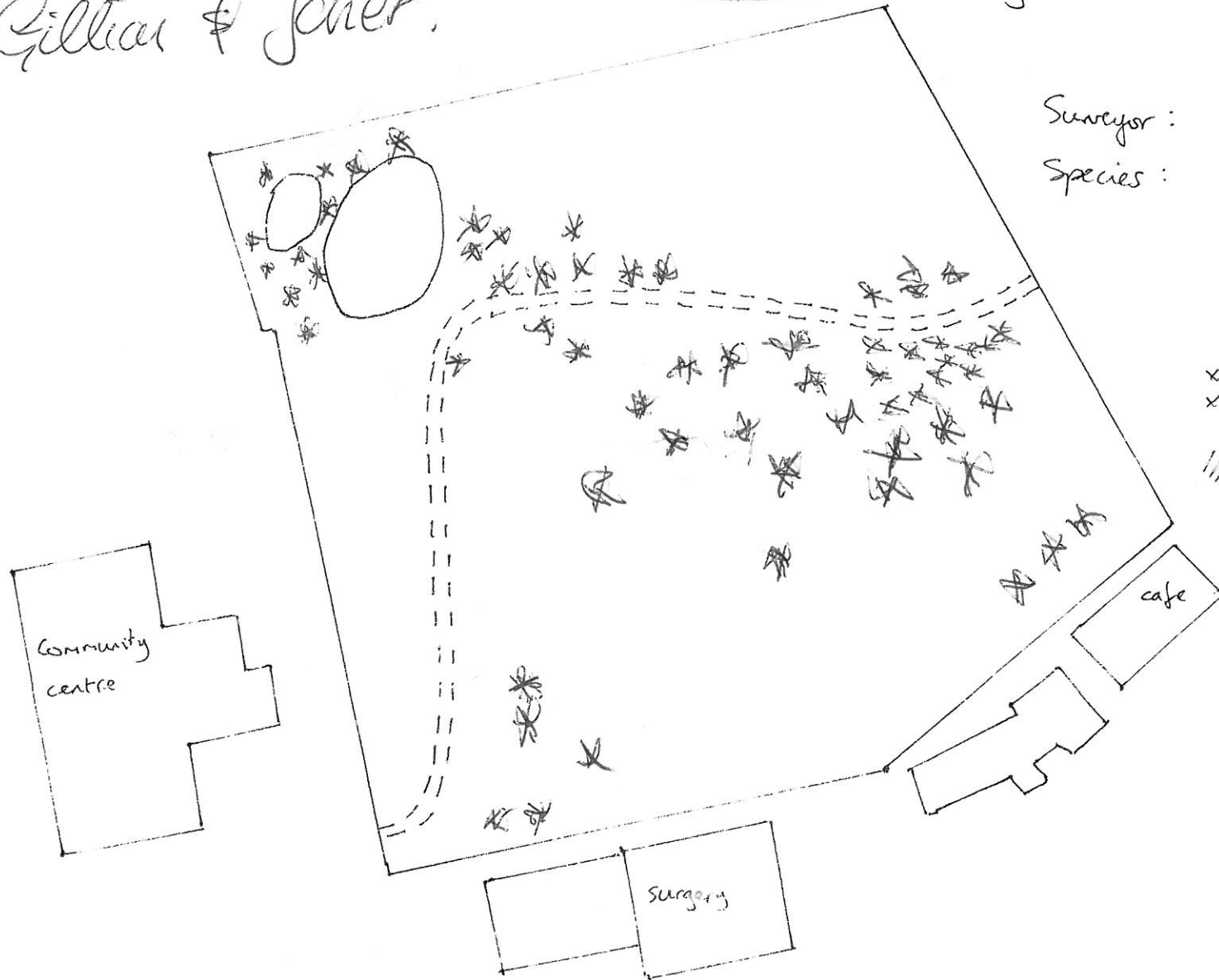
Gillian & Janet.

Lords + Ladies

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor :

Species :



Key

x x species location

y y

/// area not surveyed

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Julie + Marie  
Species: Garlic *Allium petiolatum*



Key

x x species location

//// area not surveyed.

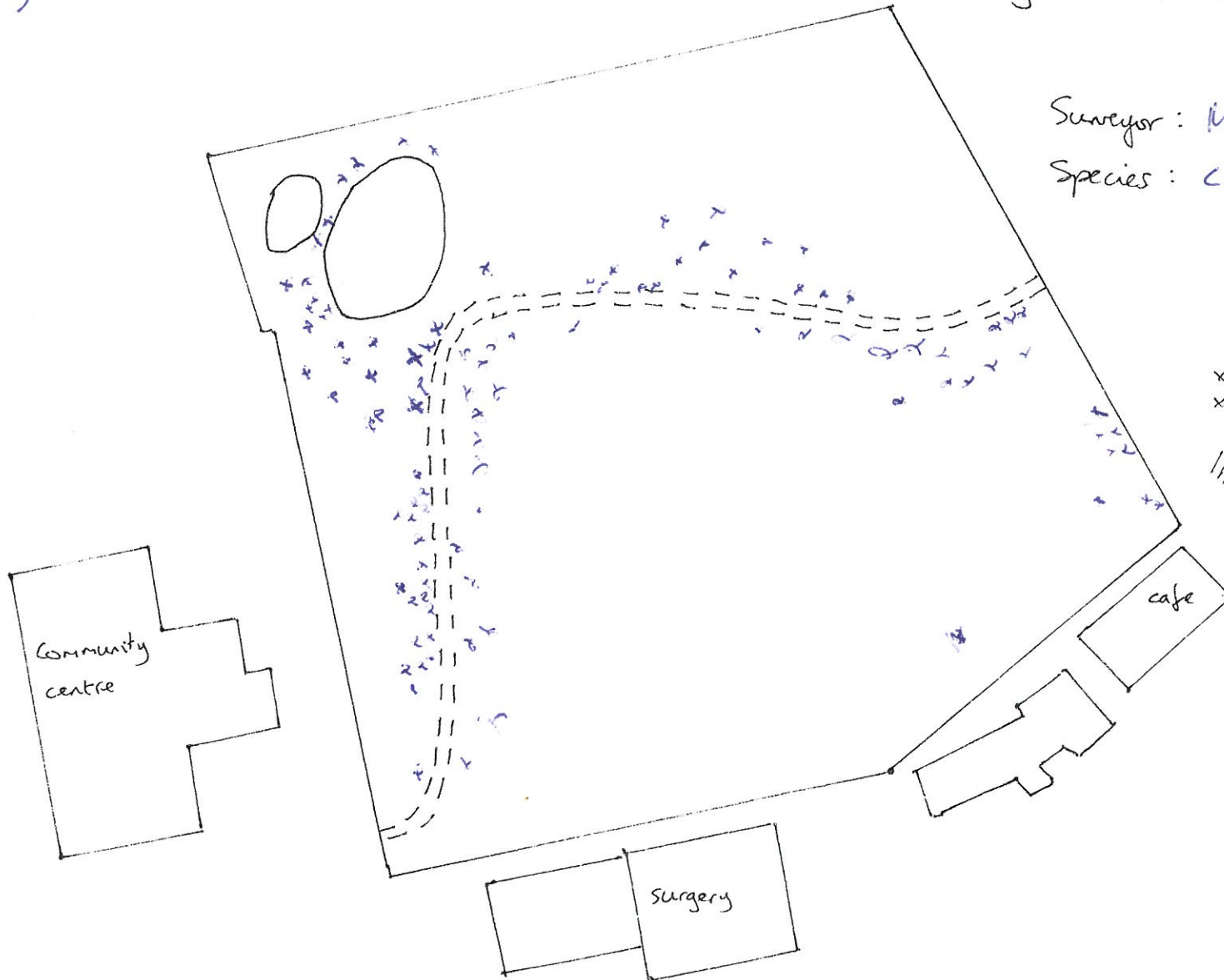
Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Cow Parsley

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: MIKE CLAIRE

Species: COW PARSLEY



Key

x x species location

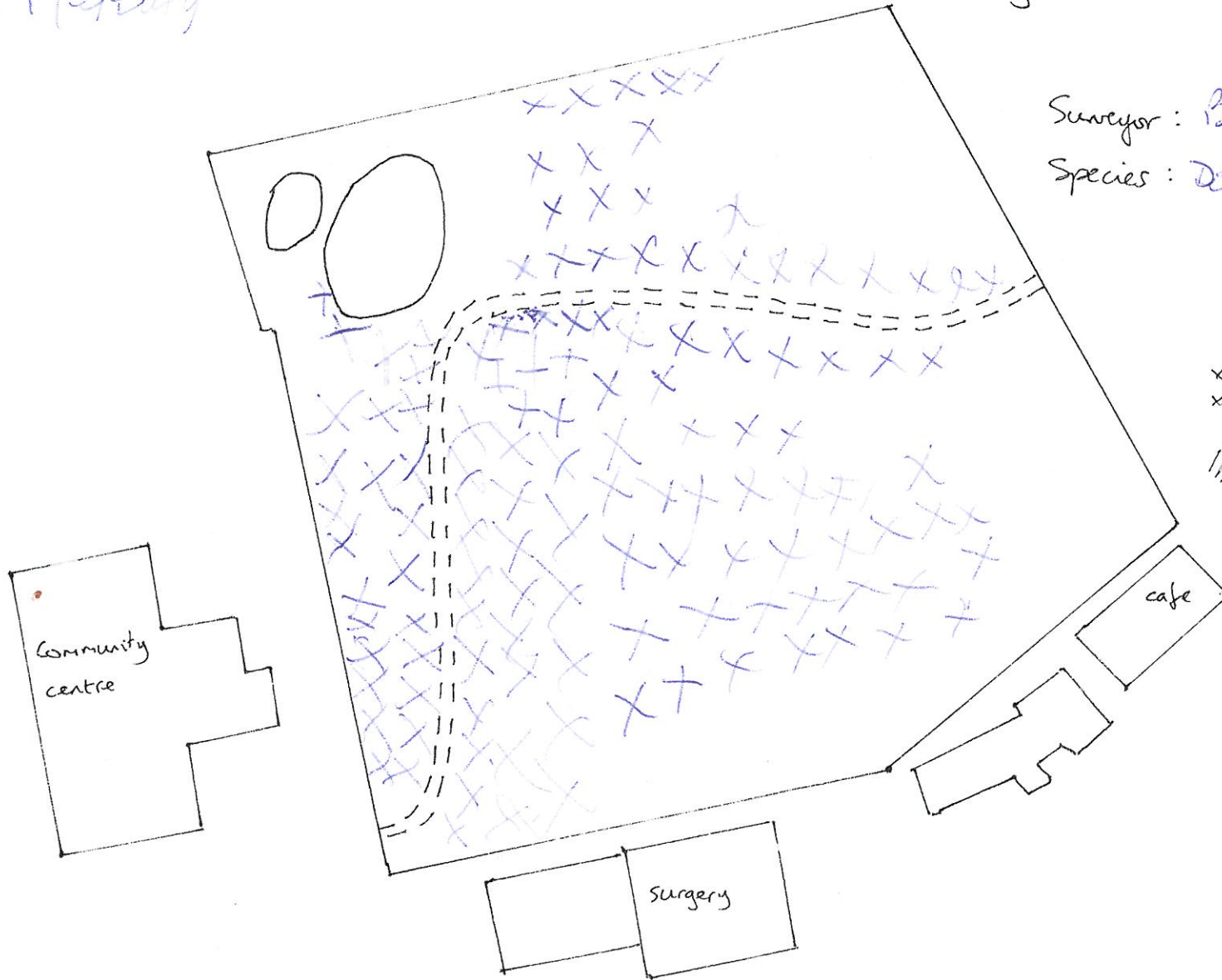
/// area not surveyed

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Dogs Mercury

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Brenda + Gerald  
Species: Dogs Mercury



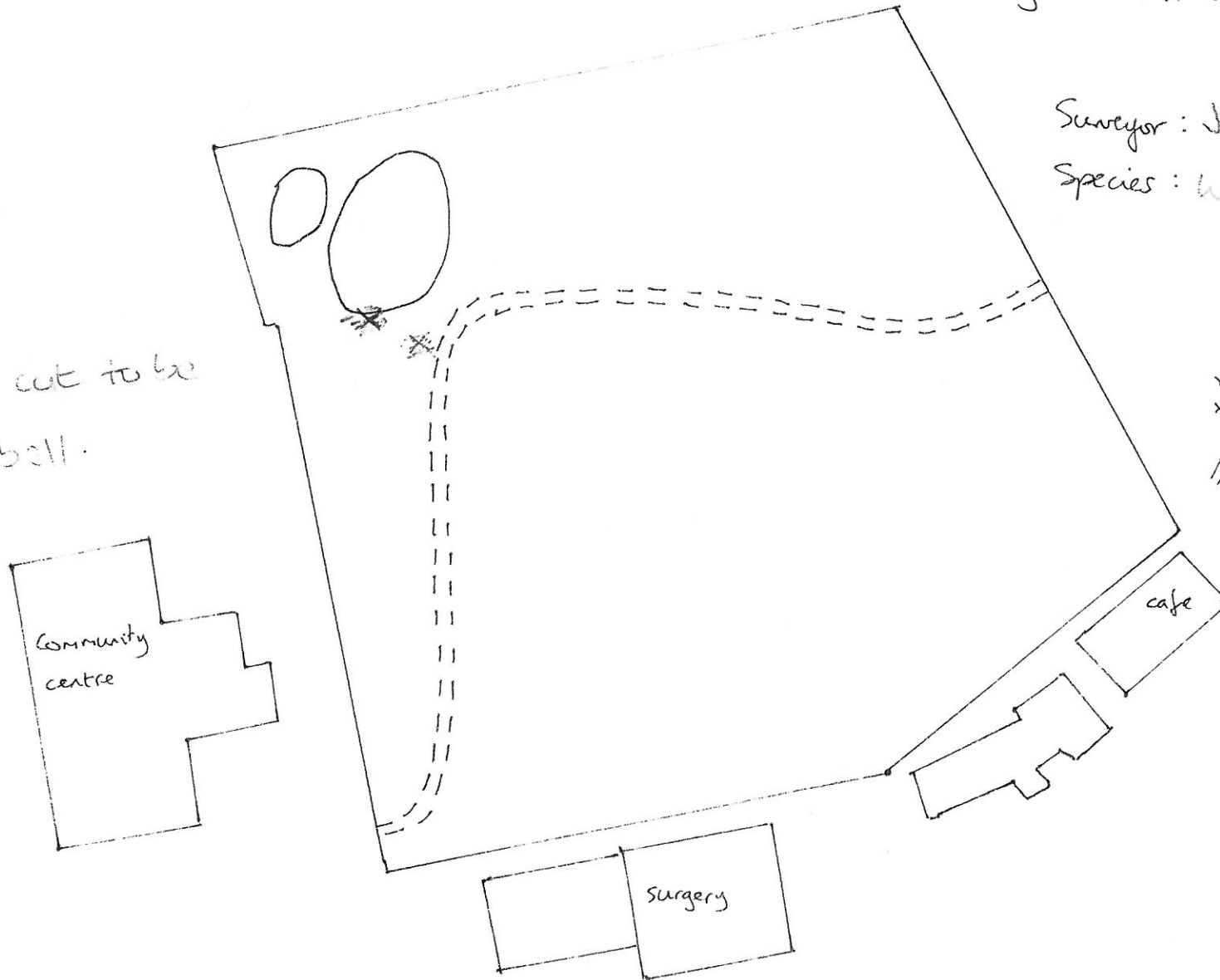
Key  
x x species location  
x x  
/// area not surveyed.

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Jenny, Jane Sibbett  
Species: Wood Sedge

tunnel cut to be  
bluebell.



key

x x species location

/// area not surveyed.



Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

open growing on path.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Jenny, Jane Sibbett  
Species: Wood Avenas



Key  
x x species location  
/// area not surveyed.

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Brenda & Isobel,  
Species: ASH



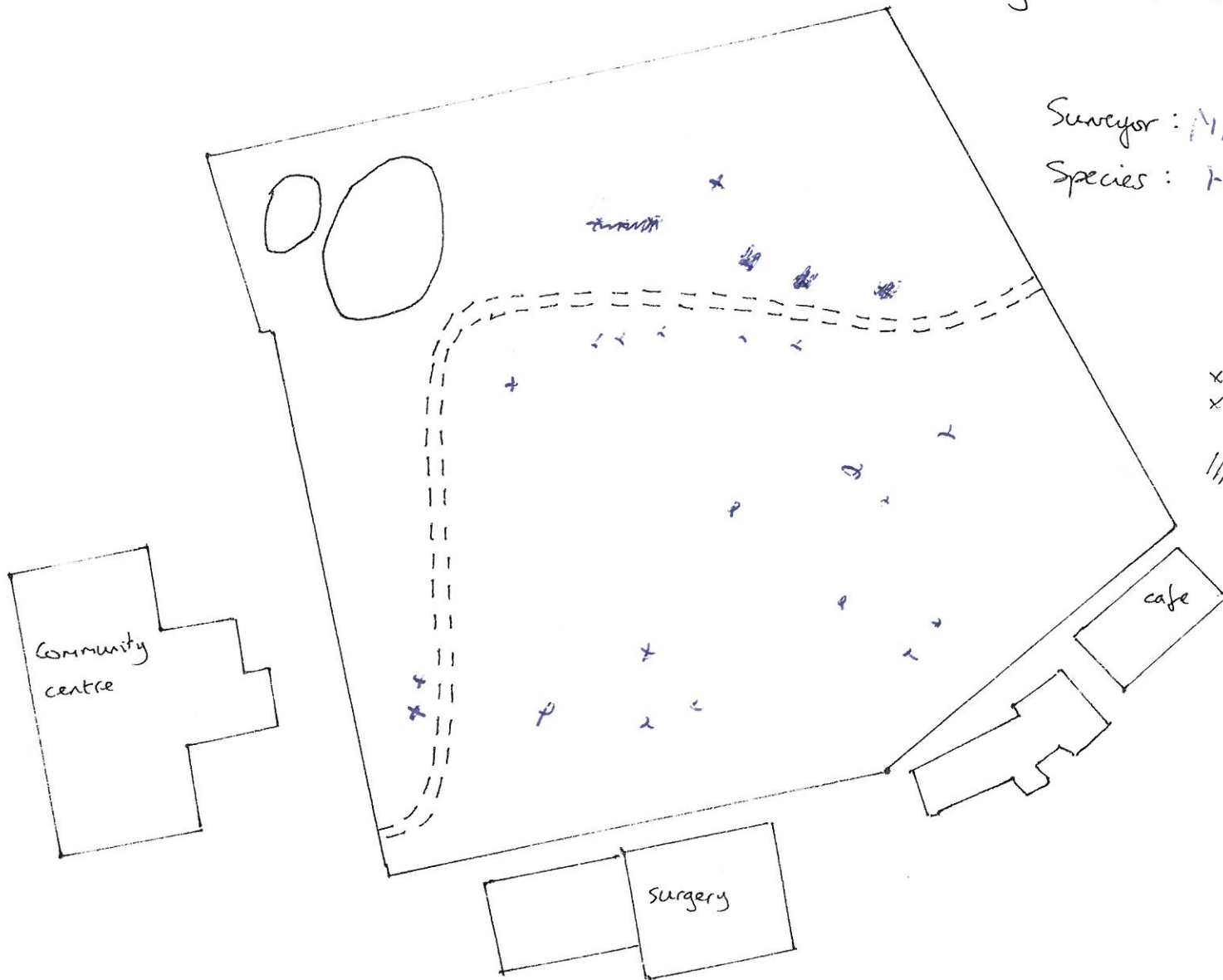
Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

HAWTHORN

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Mike CLEAVE

Species: Hawthorn



Key

x x species location

//// area not surveyed.

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

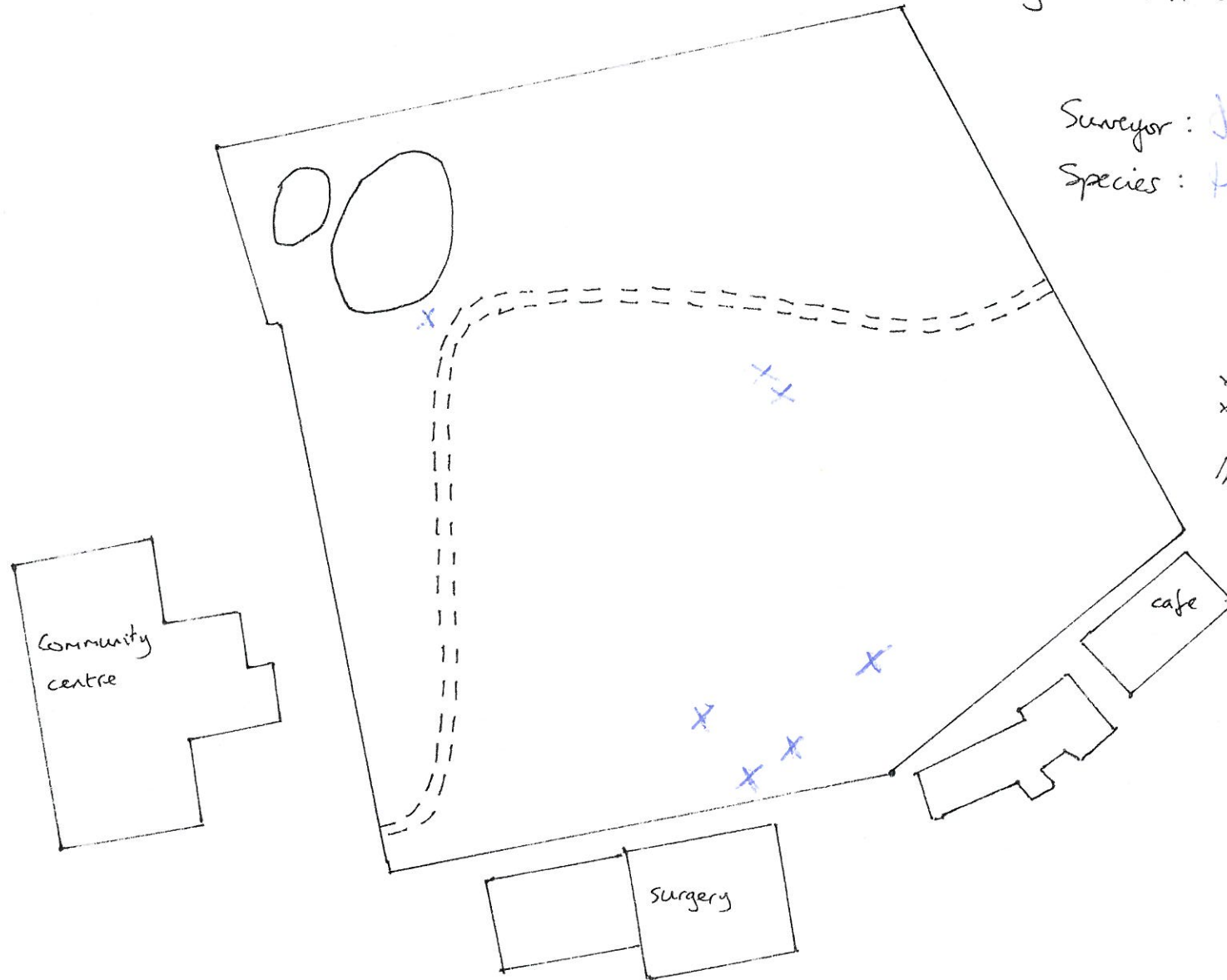
Surveyor: Jodie + Marie

Species: Holly

Key

x x species location

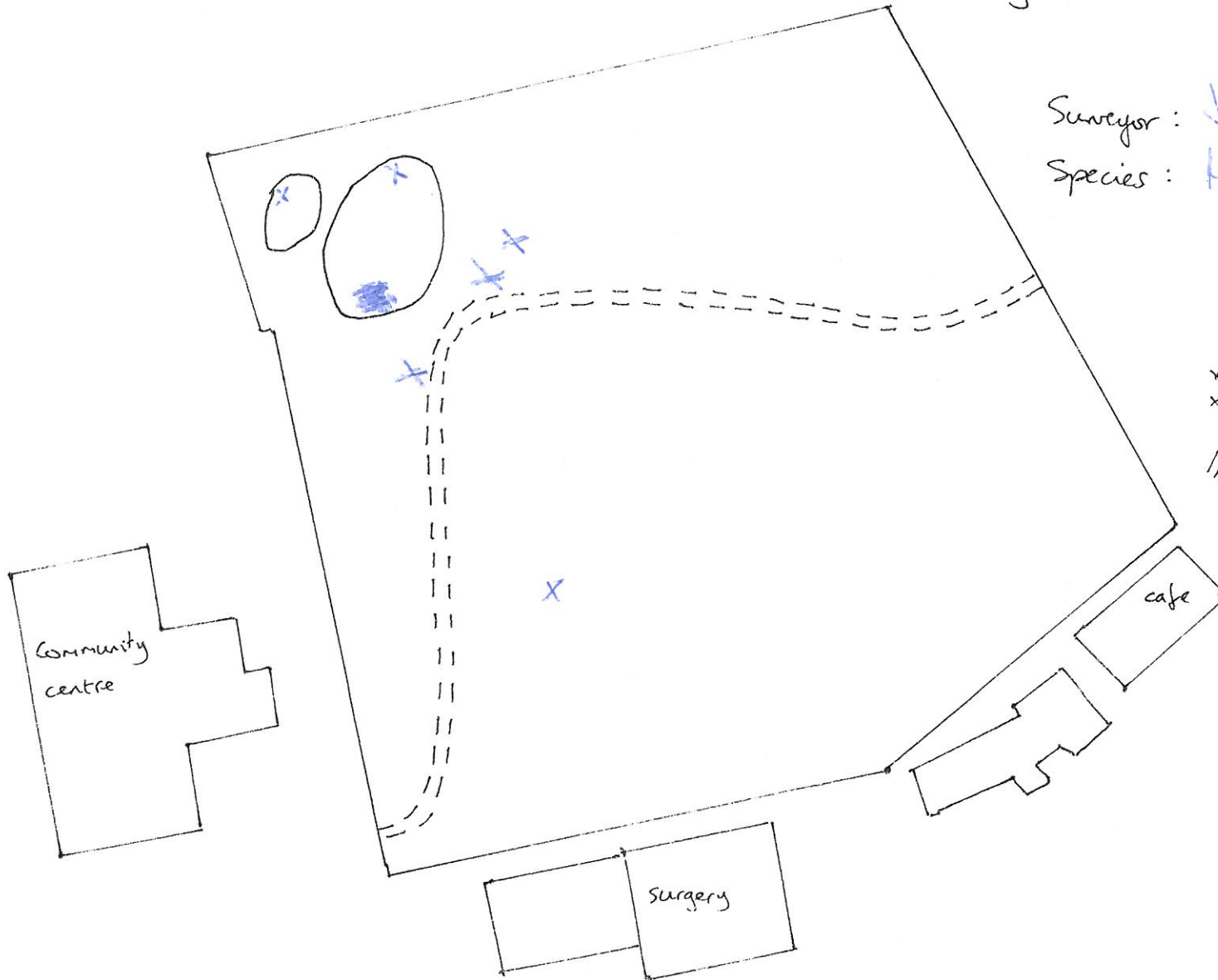
//// area not surveyed.



Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Julia + Marie  
Species: Horse chestnut

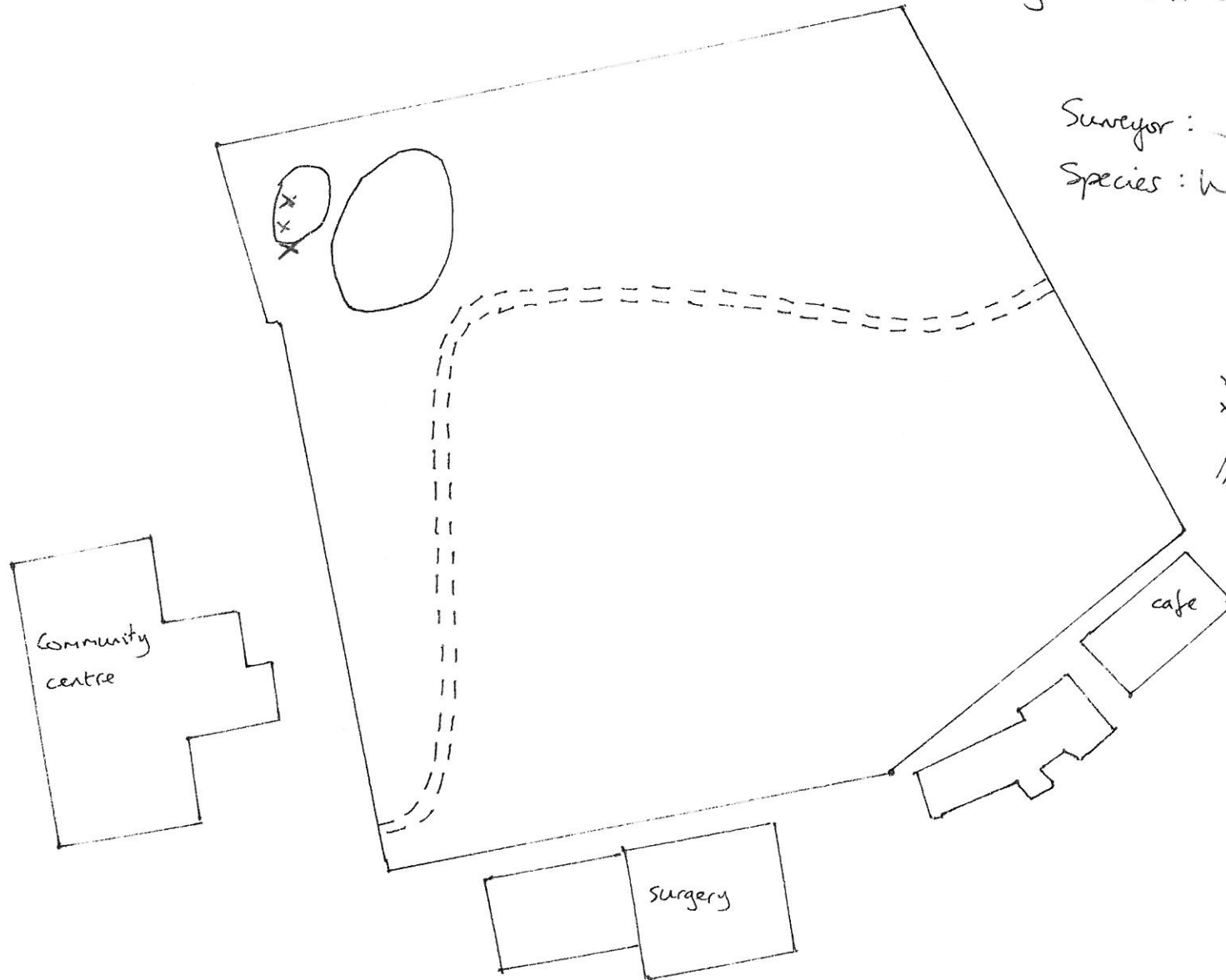


Key  
x x species location  
x y  
//// area not surveyed.

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Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Jenny Jane Sibbett  
Species: Willow



key

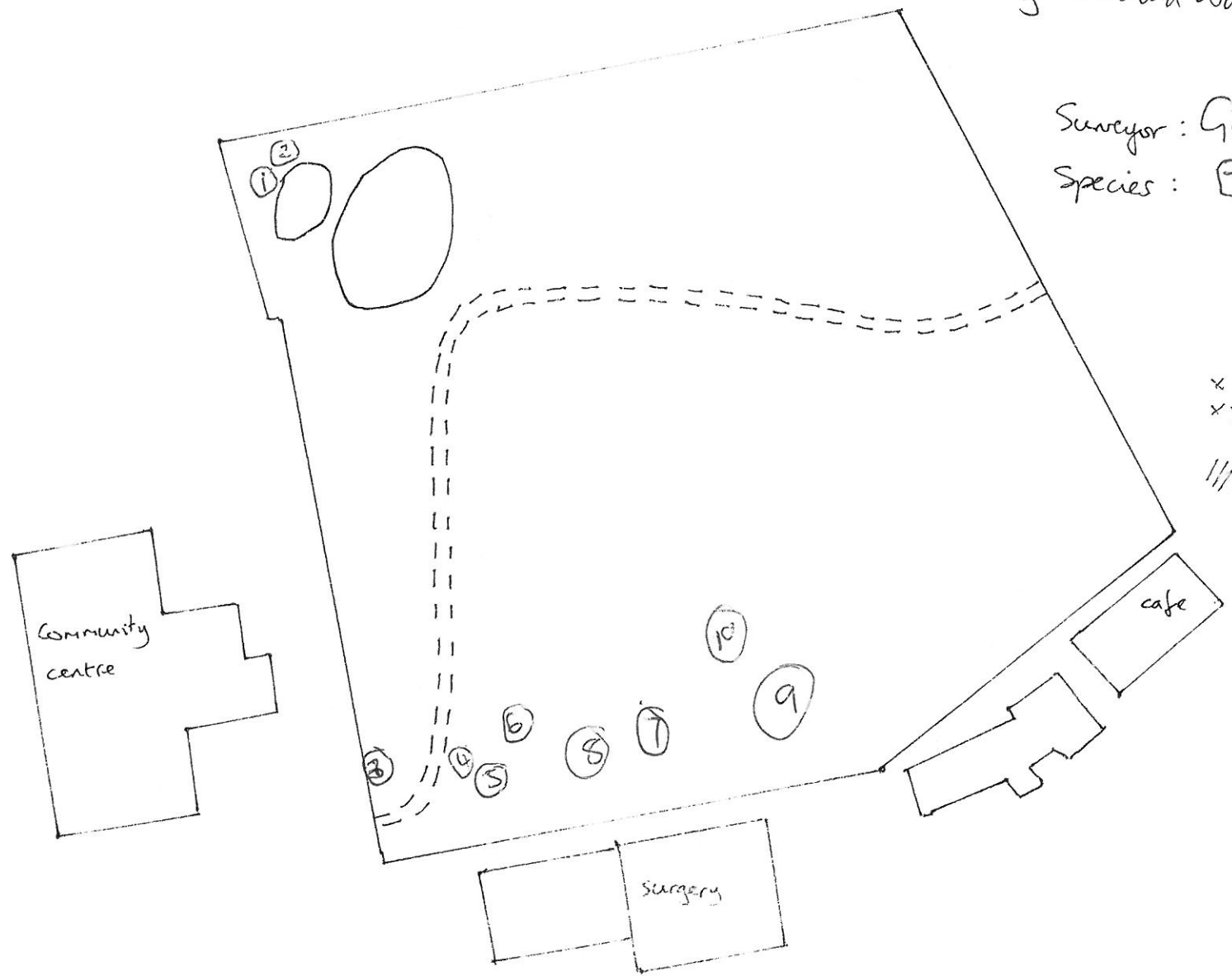
x x species location

/// area not surveyed.

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Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Gillian & Janet  
Species: Bramble



key  
x x species location  
x y  
/// area not surveyed.

Home Covert, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

Plant distribution survey  
by Woodland Ways 10th May 2015

Surveyor: Jolie + Marie

Species: Nettle



Key  
x x species location  
x x  
//// area not surveyed