**PRESS RELEASE**

INSERT DATE

**(Your organisation’s / project organiser’s name) explores (theme / topic of your Heritage Week project) in (your town or county) for National Heritage Week 2021**

(Theme / topic of your project, i.e. ‘The local woodlands / wildlife habitats; story of [name of building / landmark / etc.]; traditional skill / craft of [name of skills / craft]; etc.) in (your town or county) is the subject matter of a heritage project undertaken by [name of organisation / project organiser] to mark National Heritage Week 2021, which takes place from Saturday, 14th – Sunday, 22rd August.

As part of the week, (name of organisation / project organiser) will share the project, which explores (insert brief description of project and key details – what, where how and why).

Speaking about the project, (insert name of spokesperson) of (name of organisation) said: “[If desired, add one or two sentences in the first person about your project (example: We are very excited to showcase our project, which looks at (insert brief description) and hope that many people will enjoy exploring it via HeritageWeek.ie. The annual Heritage Week programme is a great opportunity to learn more about your local heritage and make connections with new people and stories].”

Coordinated by the Heritage Council since 2005, National Heritage Week has become one of Ireland’s largest cultural events. To take account of restrictions on gatherings due to COVID-19, rather than focusing on the organisation of events this year, local heritage groups, families and communities are invited to develop projects around this year’s approaches: heritage newcomers; heritage for all ages; and heritage sharing. Completed projects will be available on HeritageWeek.ie during National Heritage Week, where they can be explored by location and theme. All completed projects will also be considered for a National Heritage Week Award.

Commenting on National Heritage Week 2021, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, TD said*: “My department and I are pleased to support this year’s National Heritage Week, which focuses on encouraging the inclusion of as many people as possible in exploring, sharing and enjoying Ireland’s diverse heritage.*

*“I especially welcome the heritage newcomers approach taken this year, which is an invitation to those who are new to heritage to get involved. During lockdowns many of us have had more time to explore our local or personal heritage. National Heritage Week may be the perfect opportunity to showcase what you have discovered, or to dig deeper and find out more. Whatever aspect of heritage is chosen, I wish the very best to all those taking part and look forward to seeing the end results in August.”*

The Chairman of the Heritage Council, Michael Parsons, said: *“A success of last year’s online approach saw the hundreds of heritage activities organised as part of National Heritage Week made more accessible to a wide audience. This year, building on that positive impact, I strongly encourage all project organisers to think meaningfully on how they might include new members of their communities in their projects, and explore aspects of heritage that may have been overlooked in the past.”*

Chief Executive of the Heritage Council, Virginia Teehan added: *“National Heritage Week continues to be an important moment for community engagement, wellbeing and social cohesion.*

*“This year’s focus on getting as many people as possible to enjoy heritage encourages us to cast the net wide and consider reaching out to groups in the community that may not traditionally feel included in heritage. We’re particularly interested in seeing projects that include young people and provide accessibility, encouraging active engagement with our heritage across all age groups. Projects such as the ‘Pavee Roads Home’ demonstrate the deep value of intergenerational heritage projects. National Heritage Week also offers the perfect opportunity to showcase a personal heritage project that can be part of the bigger heritage landscape and shared with the wider national community.”*

For a full details of all projects developed as part National Heritage Week, visit heritageweek.ie.

**ENDS**

**Images Available: Insert Link to Images**

**Contact: (Insert your contact details)**

**Note to Editors:**

* More information is available on request.
* [Name of spokesperson] of [name of organisation] is available for local media interviews on request.

**About National Heritage Week:** National Heritage Week is co-ordinated by the Heritage Council as part of European Heritage Days – a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union in which more than 40 countries participate each year. The main aim of European Heritage Days is to promote awareness of our built, natural and cultural heritage and to promote Europe’s common cultural heritage.

National Heritage Week is supported by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and run in association with Fáilte Ireland. At county level, National Heritage Week is co-ordinated and supported by Local Authority Heritage Officers, their colleagues and with numerous local heritage groups and organisations. Collaborative partners include the Office of Public Works; the Local Authority Waters Programme; and the Irish Landmark Trust. Supporting partners include RTÉ Supporting the Arts and The Irish Times. For more information, visit heritageweek.ie.