**PRESS RELEASE**

**(Insert date, i.e. Wednesday, 1st August 2018)**

**(Your organisation’s name) to host (type of activity, i.e. workshop / lecture / reading / concert / etc.) in (your town or county) to mark**

**National Heritage Week 2018**

(Name of organisation) has today (dd.mm.yy) announced that it will host a public (type of activity) during National Heritage Week 2018, which will take place from 18-26 August.

(Insert brief description of activity and key details – what, where, when and why)

Speaking about the event, (insert name of spokesperson) of (name of organisation) said: “[If desired, add one or two sentences in the first person about this event (example: We are very excited to showcase our … and hope that many people will be able to join us for our event. The annual Heritage Week programme is a great opportunity to learn more about your local heritage and make connections with new people and stories].”

The theme of this year’s National Heritage Week is ‘**Sharing Stories’.** During the week-long celebration of Ireland’s heritage, communities across Ireland are encouraged to share heritage stories in new ways, with new people. Coordinated by the Heritage Council, National Heritage Week is Ireland’s most popular cultural event and this year more than 570,000 people are expected to participate in over 2,000 heritage events around the country.

The aim of National Heritage Week is to build heritage awareness and appreciation while shining a light on the great work that is carried out in all communities in Ireland to preserve and promote our natural, built and cultural heritage. One of the highlights of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, this year’s Heritage Week will also include many activities which explore and celebrate connections with our European neighbours and promote a sense of belonging to a common European space.

Commenting on this year’s programme of events, Chairman of the Heritage Council, Michael Parsons, said: “Our cultural heritage belongs to everyone so we are encouraging everyone to get involved, to share a story and make a connection during Heritage Week.

“People of all ages will have ample opportunity to find out more about our nature, history and culture by taking part in tours, walks, talks, exhibitions, outdoor activities and much more. From wildlife boat tours to storytelling workshops for children, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Most Heritage Week events are family-friendly and free of charge so that our shared heritage can be accessed and appreciated by all.”

For a full listing of all National Heritage Week events around (county/town) and around the country please go to [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie) or pick up a brochure from your local library and Tourist Office.

**ENDS**

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

**Note to Editors:**

**About National Heritage Week:** National Heritage Week is part of European Heritage Days – a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union in which over forty 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.

**About the Heritage Council**: The Heritage Council was established under the Heritage Act 1995 with responsibility to propose polices and priorities for the national heritage. It works in co-operation with a range of agencies, communities and individuals to promote education, enjoyment and understanding of our national heritage. For further information, visit: [www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie).

**About the European Year of Cultural Heritage**: 2018 has been designated as the European Year of Cultural Heritage by the European Commission. The initiative is designed to be truly European, with activities taking place at all levels: European, national, regional and local. The Year aims to involve all citizens in events that help to promote a sense of belonging to a common European space.

Heritage is our cultural identity, values and traditions that we have inherited from previous generations, live with today, and pass on to future generations. It includes buildings, monuments, historical and archaeological sites, museum objects, our customs, sports, music, dance, folklore, crafts and skills, and natural heritage, such as landscapes, wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

In Ireland, the Heritage Council – the statutory body charged with promoting, educating and encouraging enjoyment in Ireland’s national heritage – is coordinating the European Year of Cultural Heritage. It will coordinate and promote a national programme of European Year of Cultural Heritage events and other activities.

The theme for the Year in Ireland is ‘Make a Connection’. This theme aims to deepen the connection between people and heritage, and build a legacy of increased public engagement. To achieve this objective, the Heritage Council is inviting organisations and individuals to take action and respond to the theme. For further information, visit [www.eych2018.ie](http://www.eych2018.ie).