**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 2020**

(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 2020, which takes place from Saturday, 15th – Sunday, 23rd 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 theme of ‘Heritage and Education: Learning from our Heritage’. 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 2020, the Chairman of the Heritage Council, Michael Parsons said: *“This year, perhaps more than any other year, National Heritage Week offers a moment for community engagement and social cohesion. Heritage – in all its forms – helps us to connect with our past, build resilience and enhance our health and wellbeing. The Heritage Council is ensuring that Heritage Week goes ahead and we have modified our approach to ensure active engagement with our heritage, while protecting public health.”*

CEO of the Heritage Council, Virginia Teehan added: *“During lockdown, many people around the country – in both rural and urban environments – have developed a greater appreciation for their immediate surroundings. The restrictions have caused us to reconnect with, and reconsider what can be found in our immediate locality, from noticing birds and birdsong, and changing patterns among plants and wildlife as spring became summer, to local built heritage and monuments. Others have returned to traditional skills, be that baking, growing fruit and vegetables or handcrafts, like knitting and embroidery.*

*“National Heritage Week, and particular this year’s theme of ‘Heritage and Education: Learning from our Heritage’ offers a chance to build on this renewed interest, by exchanging skills and knowledge in a community; exploring something new or diving deeper into the story behind something you may have recently discovered.”*

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 Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and run in association with Fáilte Ireland. At the 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 Water Programme; the Irish Landmark Trust; and the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland. Supporting partners include RTÉ Supporting the Arts and The Irish Times. For more information, visit heritageweek.ie.