Example 3: Topics

EasyHelp™ uses the terms *Topics* and *Links* to describe the main components of a hypertext file whether it is a Microsoft Help file or a HTML file. Normally a topic contains links to other topics and we will see in the later examples how a link can be a pieces of text or a graphic picture.

What you should do in this example

More information about Topics

Note for HTML Users

What you need to do in this example

This example is to gain practice at deleting and marking up topics. You should read through and then do the following:

1. *Process and Build this document.*
   Just to check everything is working fine.

2. *Position the cursor on the heading below entitled: 'More information about Topics'.*
   We are going to delete the topic mark-up and then recreate the topic.

3. *Press the 'Delete' button on the EasyHelp toolbar.*
   You will notice the colour returns to the 'auto' colour which is normally black.

4. *Now with the cursor still in the heading press the 'Topic' button on the EasyHelp toolbar.*
   A dialog will appear in the centre of your screen.

5. *Type the name 'More' and press the OK button.*
   That's it, the title will change colour, meaning you have created a topic. You may want to *Process* and *Build* just to check that you have created the topic properly.

6. *When you are ready you can close this document and open the next example*.
   The next example document is called EX4.DOC

That's it for this example but you might want to read the rest of the information in this file.

More information about Topics

7. If you intend to put Links in topics headings, always create the Topic first.

8. By default, the text of the title is used as the title and keyword that appear in the Microsoft Help search dialog. You can changes these by editing the *'Topic Details File'*. More on this later.

9. By default a simple single browse sequence is created for you. You can easily change this by editing the *'Topic Details File'*.

10. You could try making this topic a 'popup' topic instead of a 'jump' topic. But if you do, make sure the link to it is changed to a 'popup' link. Topics and Links should be of the same type.
    When marking a link to an existing topic in the same document EasyHelp will automatically correct your mistakes.

11. You will notice that in the topic dialog there is a **Goto** button. Use this if you want to find the first link to the topic.

12. If you want to use the help file from a program such as Visual Basic or C, you can also specify a **Context Id** for the topic.
    *A C header file is automatically created for you when you **Process** your Document.*

13. Topic names should not contain spaces and cannot be longer than 26 characters in this version of EasyHelp.

Notes for HTML users

- EasyHelp puts a horizontal rule after the title paragraph in each topic. This makes it look very similar to a Microsoft Help file - you will be able control this behaviour in later releases of EasyHelp.

- By default, all topics in a document are converted to local topics in a single HTML file. There is a setting in the EASYHELP.INI file that enables you to produce a separate HTML file for each topic:

```
[HTML Format]
SplitTopics=yes
```

If you select this behaviour the file names are automatically decided for you the first time you process your document. They are written to the topic details file. If you wish, you can change the names in this file and then reprocess to resolve conflicting names

- In this release EasyHelp will do only do a basic conversion of tables and by default this is switched off because of the time it takes. If you wish to enable this behaviour make sure the following setting in your EASYHELP.INI file:

```
[HTML Format]
Tables=yes
```

Topic Details File

The **Topic Details File** contains information about your topics, it is held externally so that it does not clutter your document, and to allow different hypertext formats to be supported. This file can be edited via the EasyHelp Configuration dialog. Each topic has a section similar to the one below:

```
[Contents]
Type=Jump
Description=Contents page
Keywords=All about;EasyHelp;Help;HTML
Browse=ex3
ContextNumber=100
HtmlFilename=content
```

In later versions of EasyHelp all the settings for Topics and Links will be accessible via dialogs within EasyHelp.