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LIVE WEBINAR

Maximizing Re-use Within MadCap Flare

PRESENTED BY:

Matthew Ellison, Director | UA Europe

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LIVE WEBINAR

BEFORE WE GET STARTED...

The webinar will be recorded and emailed to all registrants

Use the Question Panel in GoToWebinar to ask questions throughout the webinar

Matthew Ellison

- Consultant and trainer for User Assistance tools and technologies since 1993
- User of MadCap products since 2006
- Certified Flare Instructor
- Based in the UK

madcap™ FLARE CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR

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What we'll cover in this webinar

- What do we mean by maximising re-use?
- Brief survey of Flare re-use features
- Focus on Snippets and Variables
  - Creating
  - Using
  - Sharing
- Overriding snippet and variable content in a range of wonderful ways

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What do we mean by re-use?

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Re-use

- Write once, use many times
- Content:
  - Word or phrase
  - Paragraph or content chunk
  - Topic
- Assets:
  - Style sheet
  - Master page
  - Skin, etc.

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What do we mean by maximizing re-use?

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Maximizing re-use

- Take all reasonable opportunities for re-use
- Can we go too far?
  - additional management time must be < saved maintenance time
  - paragraph-level or higher
  - localization can be an issue

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Flare features that support content re-use

Snippets

Variables

Glossary Term
Conversion

Project Linking

Master Pages

Page Layouts

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Focus on Snippets and Variables

- What do they have in common?
- What are the key differentiating aspects?

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Comparing Snippets and Variables

	Variables	Snippets
Content type	String of **plain text**	Chunk of **XHTML**
Typical size	Small	Typically larger (but < topic)
Examples of use	Product name Phone number	Warning Common steps
File type	.flvar	.flsnp
Storage location	Project>Variables	Content

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Comparing Snippets and Variables

	Variables	Snippets
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Examples of use	Prod ct name Pho umb	Warning Common steps
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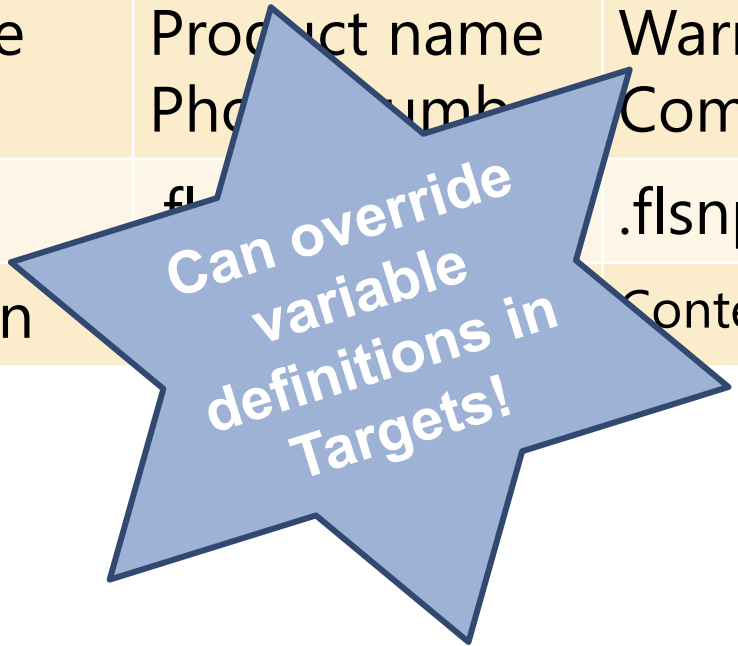
Storage location		Content



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Two distinct types of snippet

- Block-level
- Inline (< 1 para)

Creating a snippet

- Can create from existing topic content

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Inserting a snippet

- Must insert block-level snippet into an empty paragraph
- Drag snippet from Context Explorer
- Can pin frequently use snippets
- Snippets as re-usable content templates

DEMONSTRATIONS

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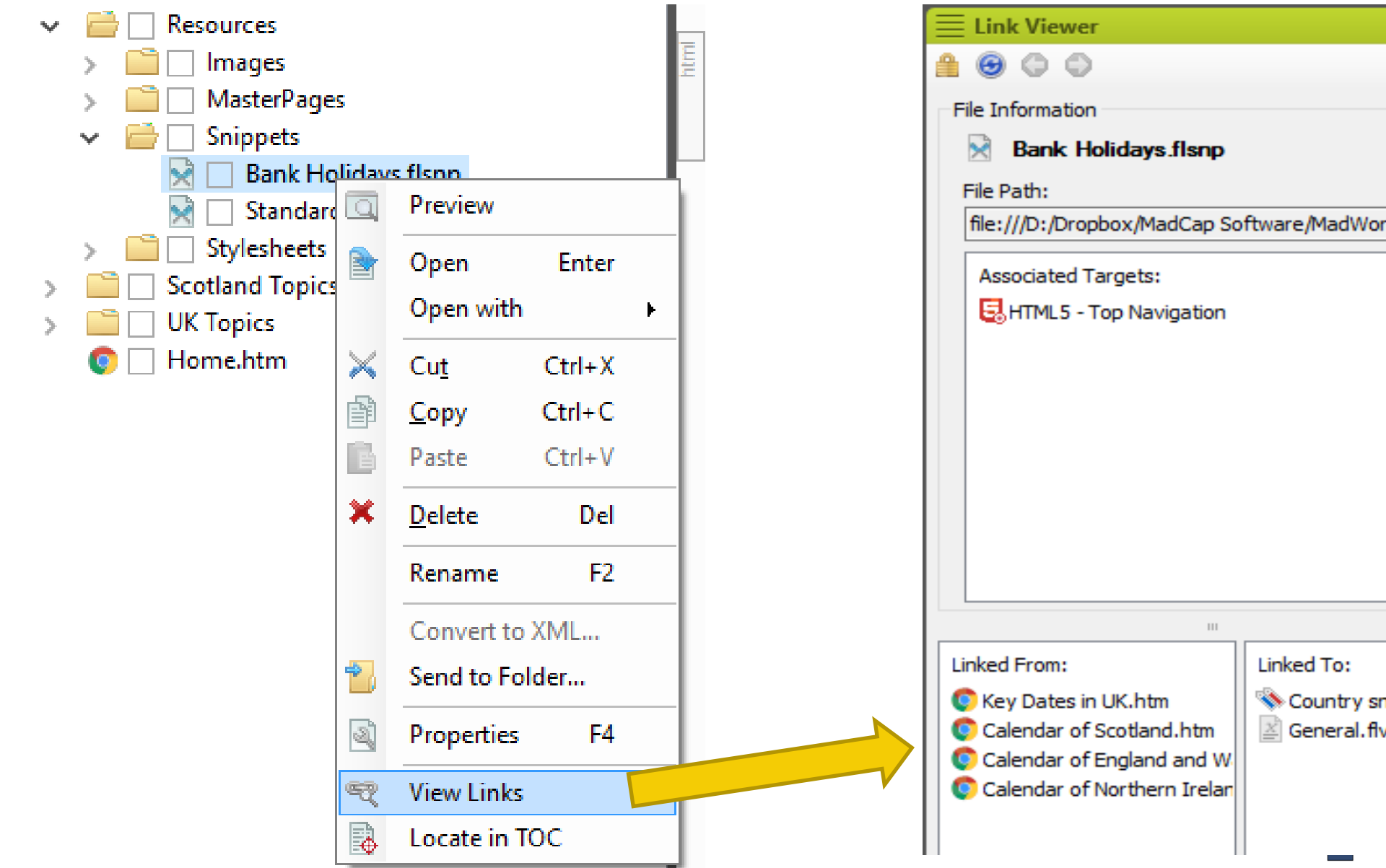
Viewing snippet usage



Sharing snippets between projects

- Cut and paste – what's wrong with that?

- Project linking:
  - Related projects
  - Adhoc/opportunistic
  - Top-down

Need conventions for naming and categorization

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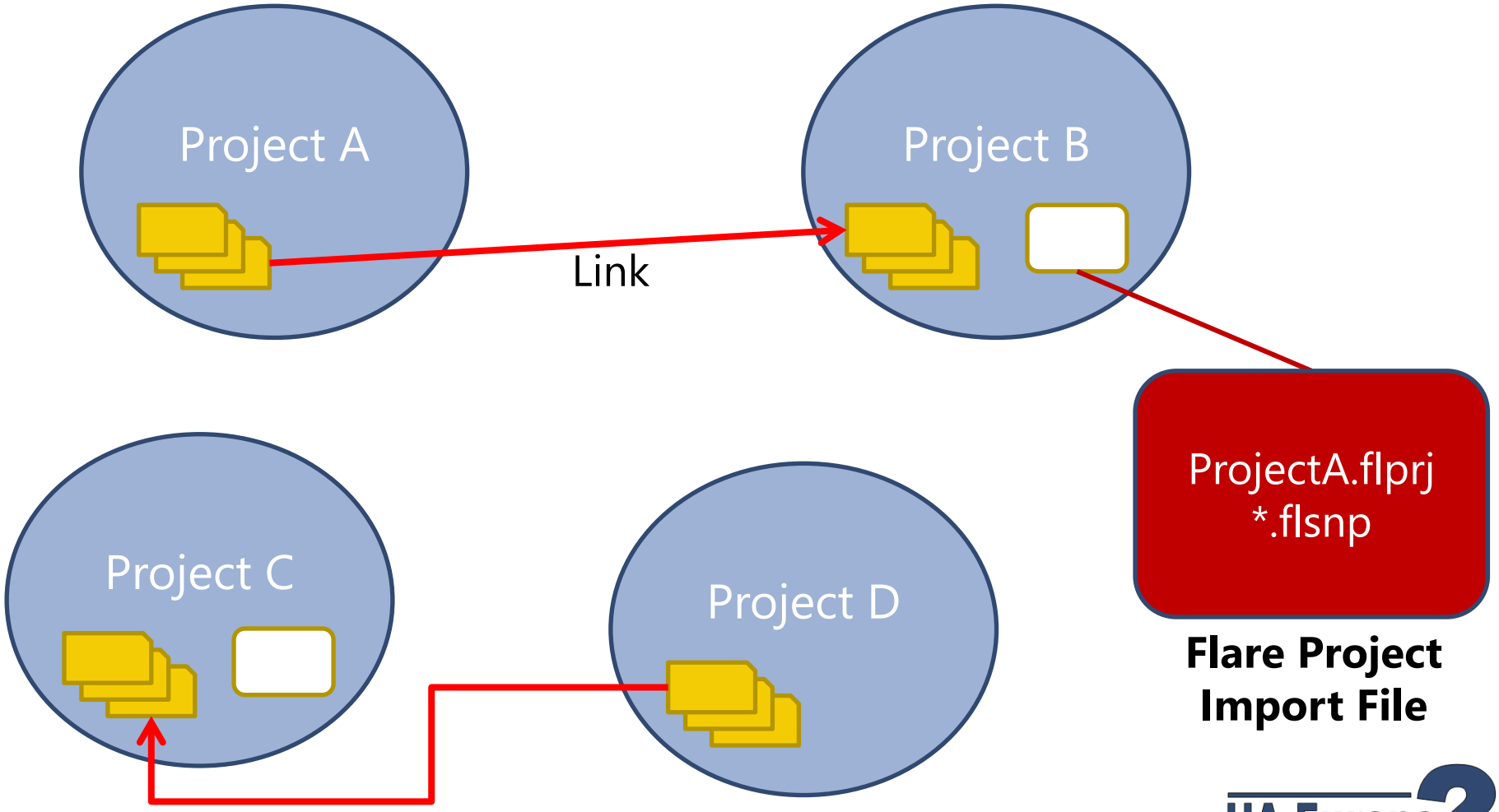
Sharing between related projects



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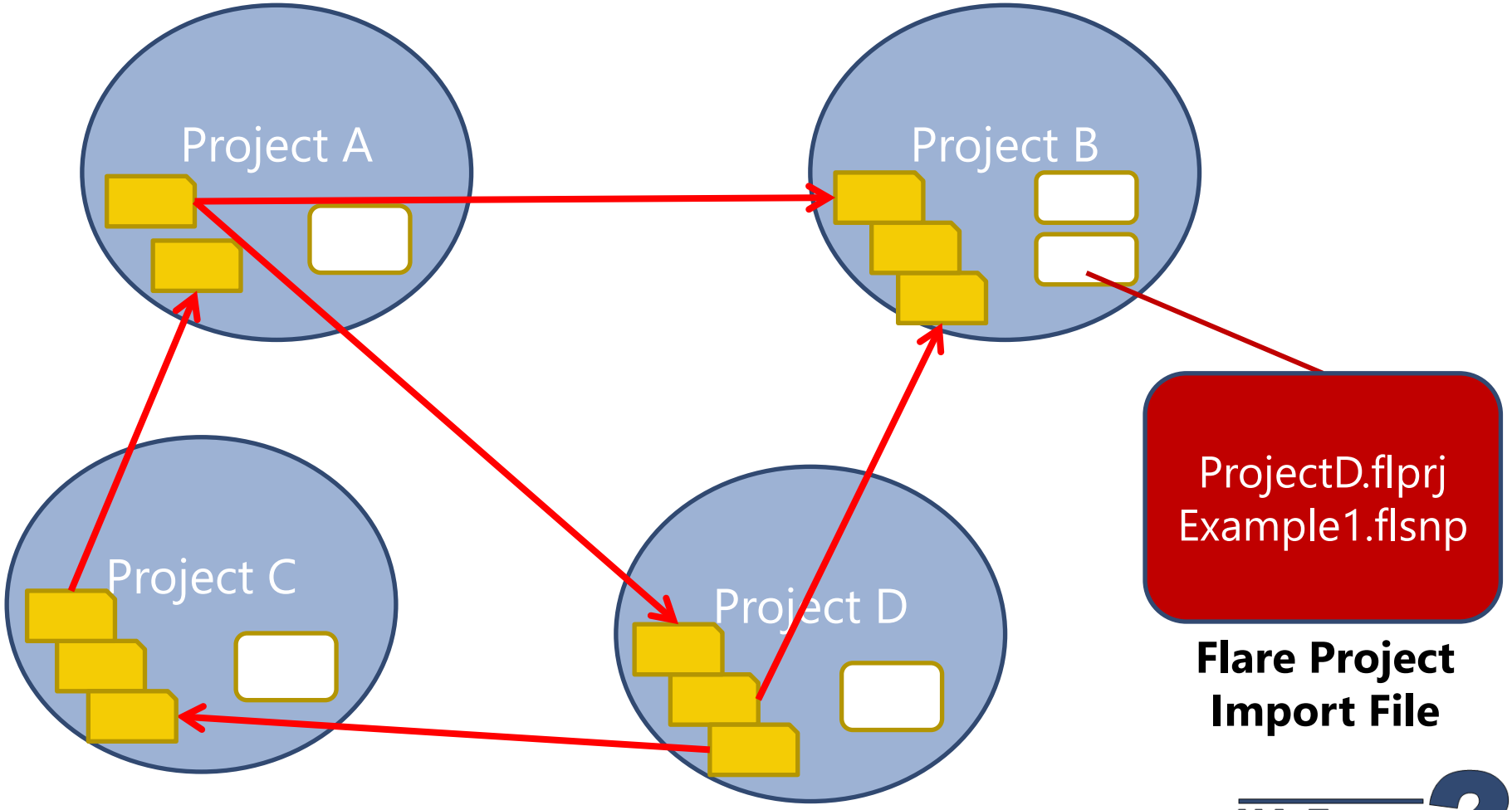
Adhoc/opportunistic sharing



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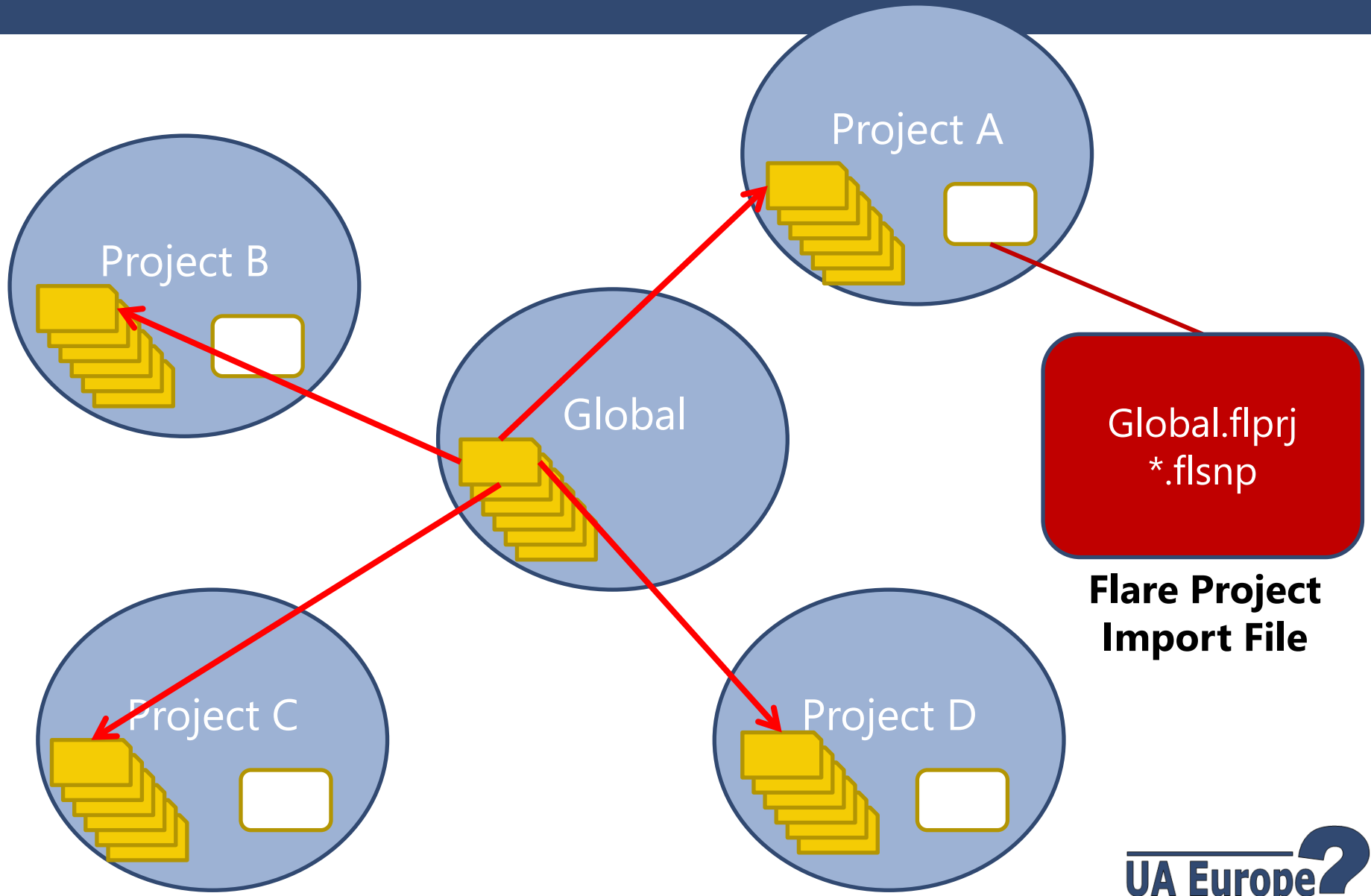
Global project



Alternative – External Resources

- Two-way synchronization
- Lack of central control

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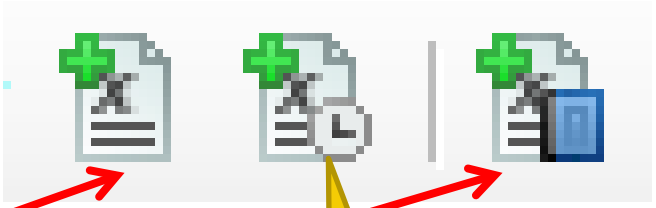
Variables

3 different types

- System
- Custom text
- Date/Time



Add [alternative] Variable Definition

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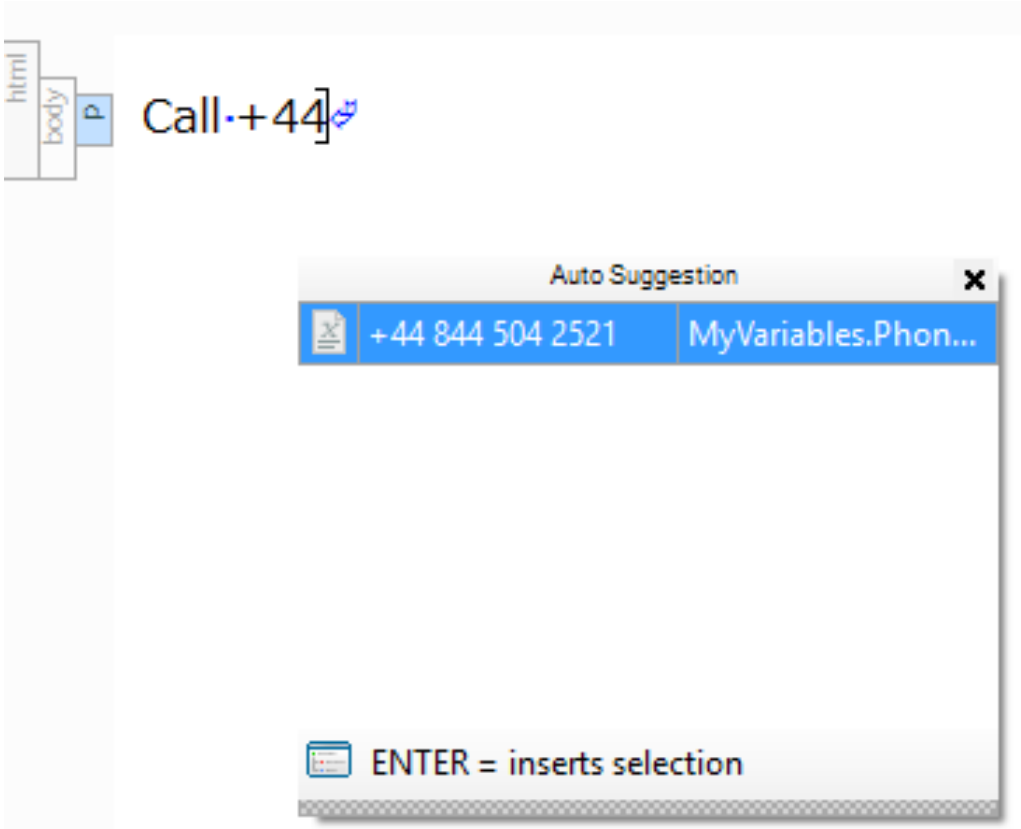
Inserting a custom text variable

- Type first three characters of definition



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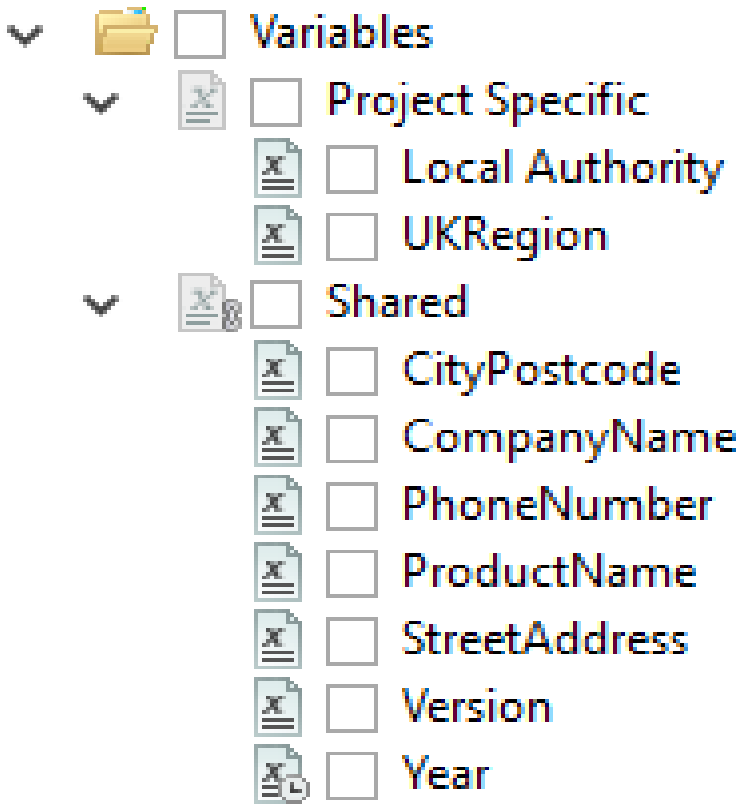
Sharing variables between projects

- Separate **shared** variables from **project-specific** variables



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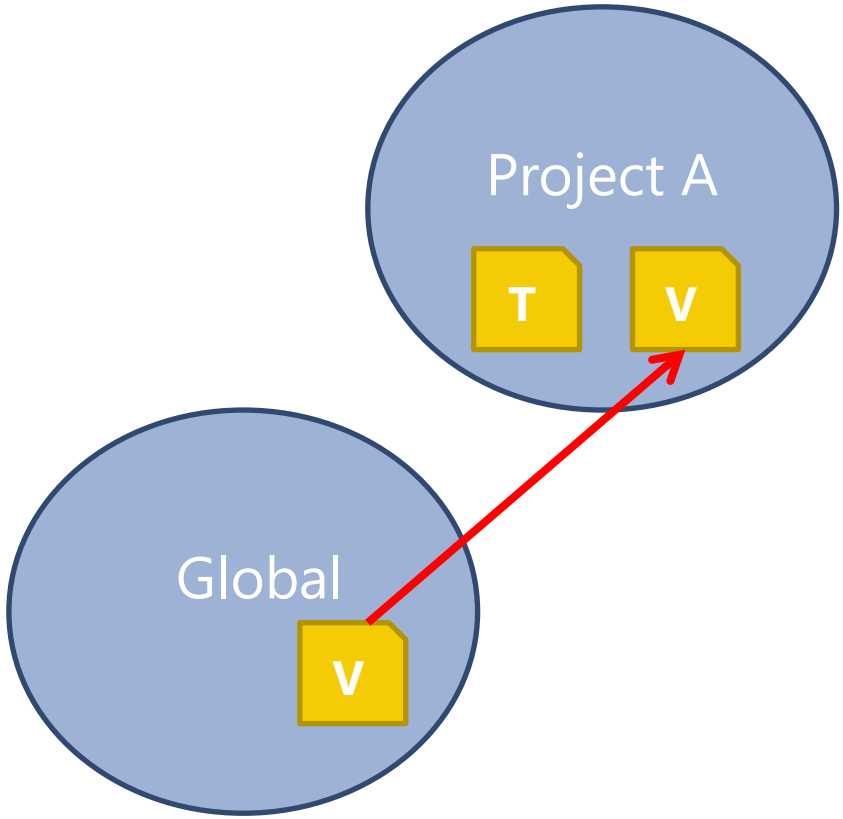
Shared variables with project-specific definitions

- Can't redefine within Project A variable set
- Instead, define within **Target**



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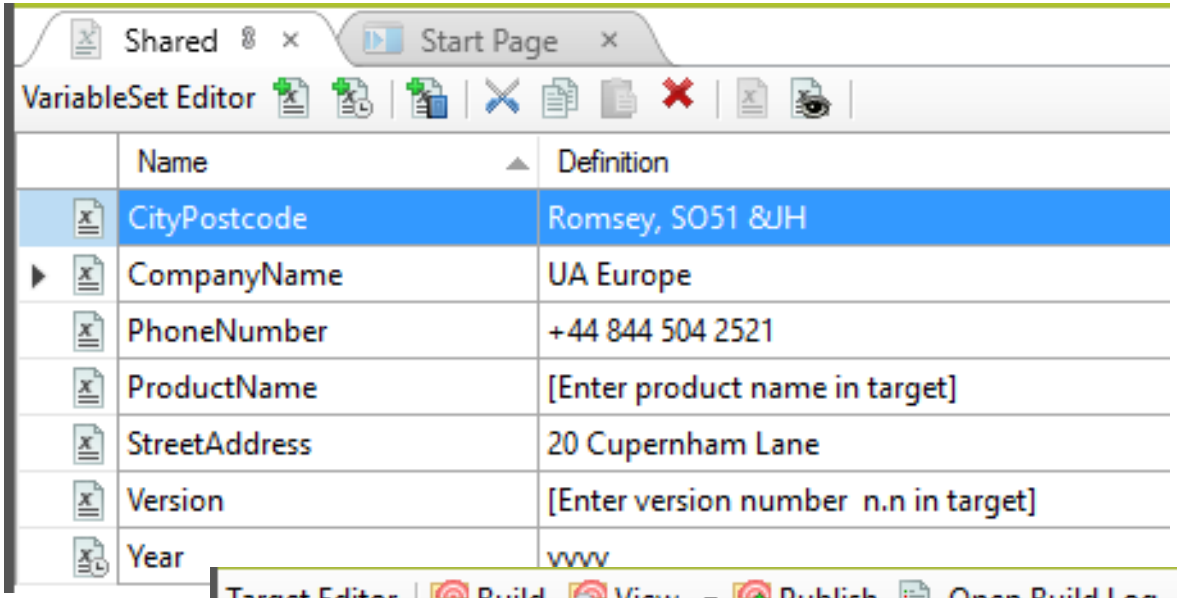
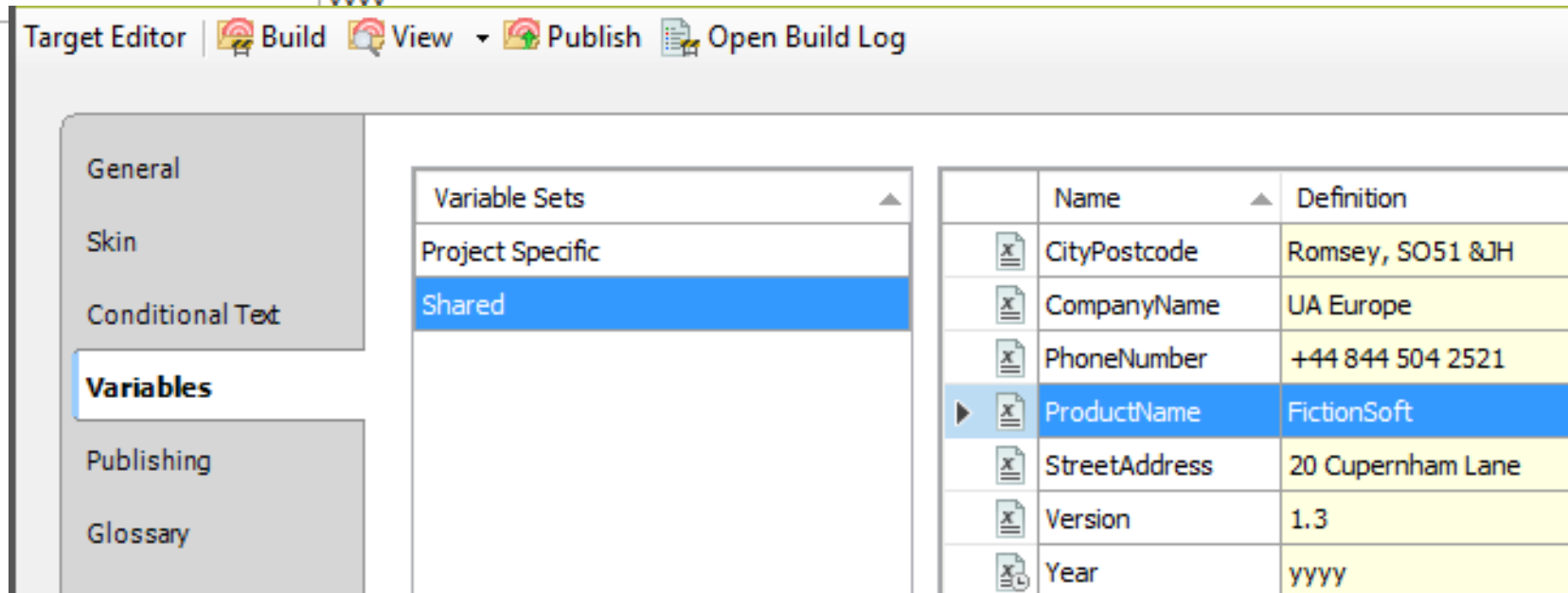
Defining variables within Target





Final piece of re-use flexibility: Customizing the content of snippet instances

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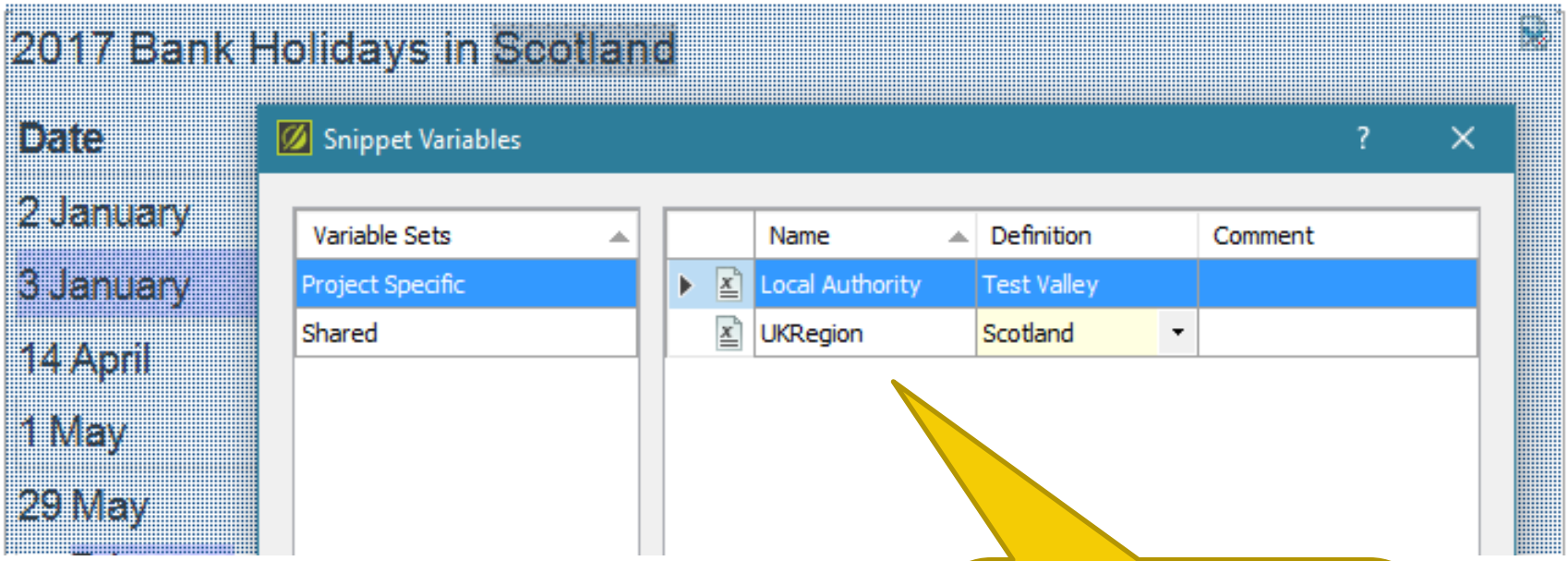
Changing variable definitions...



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Variable redefined for this instance of the snippet

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Changing other content within snippets...

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Apply conditions within Snippet

2018 Bank Holidays in England and Wales

Date	Holiday
1 January	New Year's Day
2 January	2nd January
19 March	St Patrick's Day (substitute day)
30 March	Good Friday
2 April	Easter Monday
7 May	Early May bank holiday
28 May	Spring bank holiday
12 July	Battle of the Boyne (Orangemen's Day)
6 August 27 August	Summer bank holiday
30 November	St Andrew's Day
25 December	Christmas Day
26 December	Boxing Day

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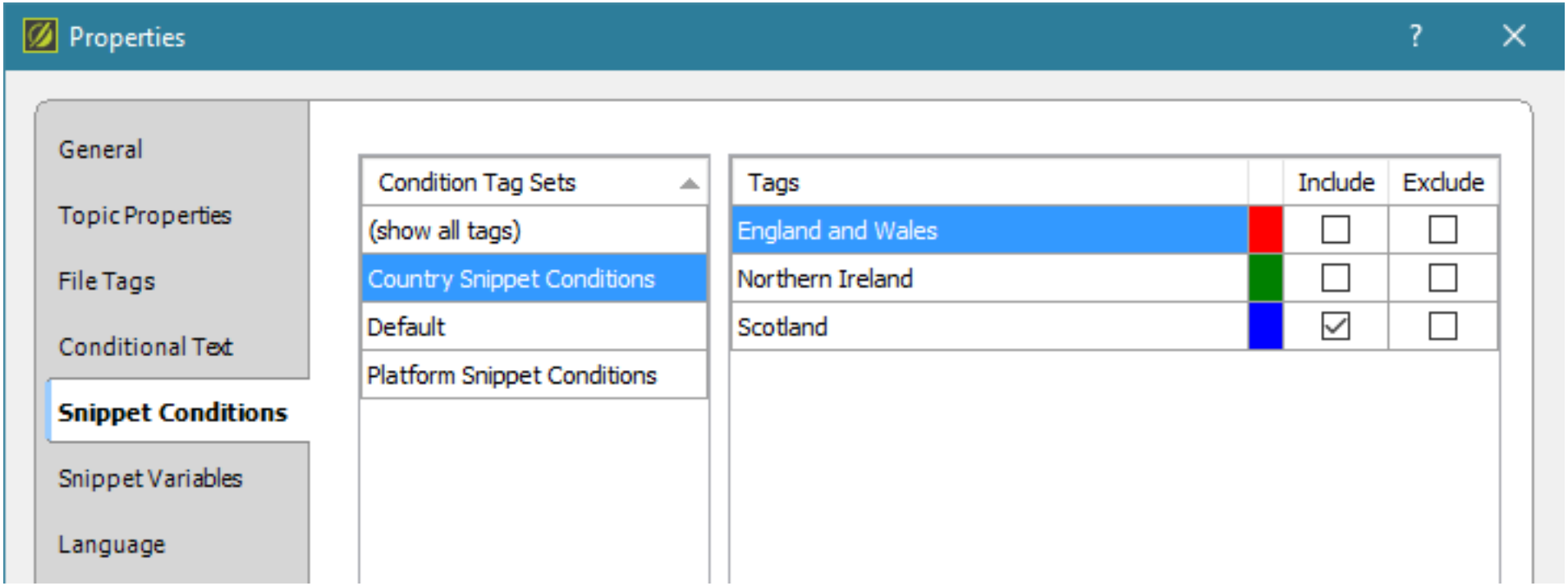
Select Snippet Conditions in Topic Properties



Result

Calendar of Scotland

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque laudantium, totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa quae ab illo inventore veritatis et quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta sunt explicabo.

2018 Bank Holidays in Scotland

Date	Holiday
1 January	New Year's Day
2 January	2nd January
30 March	Good Friday
7 May	Early May bank holiday
28 May	Spring bank holiday
6 August	Summer bank holiday
30 November	St Andrew's Day
25 December	Christmas Day
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Benefit of Snippet Conditions

- We can create larger, more flexible, easier-to-maintain snippets

Alternative solution without Snippet Conditions

Snippets for content common to multiple regions

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Summary

- Flare has a range of features that support content re-use
- Snippets and variables can make content creation and update more efficient, as well as ensuring consistency
- Consider storing shared snippets and variables in a global project
- Variables can be redefined in targets and snippets
- Consider using snippet conditions for increased flexibility

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