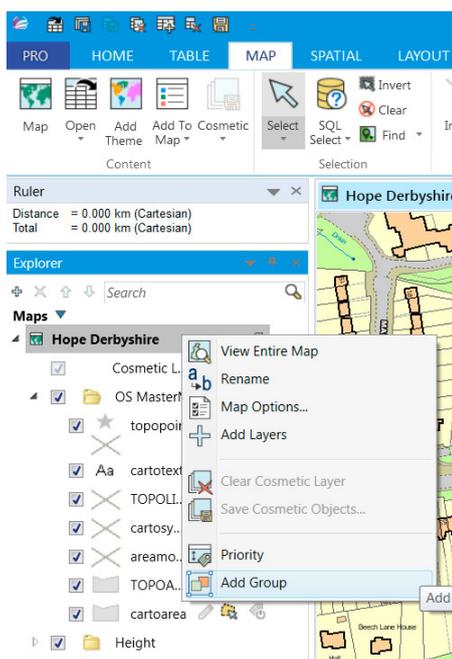# This Week's Wisdom:

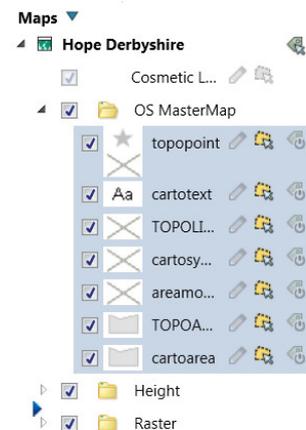## Grouping Layers and Friendly Names

Group Layering is a fantastic tool to help organise your layers in the Explorer Panel. It allows you to collapse down large lists of tables into more managable folders. It's easy to master and yet underutilised by most MapInfo users!

Creating a Group

Right click on the Map in the Explorer Panel (we've called ours Hope Derbyshire see left). At the bottom of the pop-up menu is 'Add Group'. Name your Group and then drag and drop your layers into the folder. You can hold down Shift or Ctrl to select multiple layers at the same time. If you change your mind, simply drag the layers back out of the group. *(Right shows all MasterMap layers selected and then dragged into the MM group >)*

Grouping doesn't affect your zoom layering on individual layers, it just keeps things tidy in your Explorer panel. This is particularly useful when you're working with MasterMap or other maps which require a lot of layers. It also allows you to show or hide a whole group of layers with one click. Just toggle the Tickbox to the left of the group.
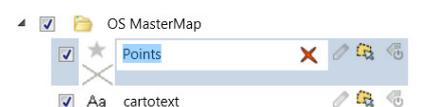
Removing a Group

Simply right click on the group folder and select Ungroup. The layers return to the parent level.
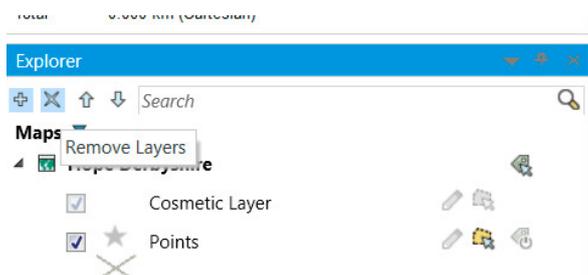
Friendly Names

MapInfo allows you to assign a friendly name to your tables. This renames the layer in your Explorer panel but the original table name still remains the same. We find this really useful for long table names that just don't fit in the Explorer Panel or for making names user friendly; friendly names can have spaces and use ASCII characters. These names are stored in the workspace .WOR file.

You can rename all elements of the Layer Control panel including the map name and group names by right clicking and selecting Rename. To revert to the original table name, simply click Rename and select the red X.

Output

Friendly names and layer groups are carried through in MapInfo outputs such as layered PDFs. The friendly name will also display as default in map legend titles. Both of these features significantly improve the usability of your map outputs without impacting on your original table names.

Removing Layers

To remove layers from your map, select all the required layers using the Shift or Ctrl key (as above to move them into a group) and click the X at the top of the Explorer Panel. This removes the layer from the current map window but doesn't close the table, allowing you to add the layer to other maps within the same workspace (Add Layer +). To completely close the table, use the Close Table command Table > Close or right click in the Table List (below the Layer Control).