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TIME TO THINK AGAIN ABOUT 21ST CENTURY WOOD WINDOWS

What comes to mind when you think about wood windows? If you think they can only be single glazed, that they need lots of maintenance and care or that they simply don't last, then it's definitely time to think again.

The last decade has seen some dramatic technological advances in the manufacturing processes for wood windows. All of these have addressed once and for all the performance, durability and maintenance issues you may remember from that time when PVC-U alternatives seemed such a good idea. What's more, with public endorsement by Greenpeace and WWF as the greenest choice of window material, wood windows have come into their own as the best environmental choice.

With a major new industry-backed campaign to promote wood windows just launched, there are already some strong signs that the infatuation with plastic windows, forged through some of the hardest sell tactics known to consumers, is on the wane as more homeowners, architects and specifiers turn to wood to provide everything they need in a good window.

According to the Wood Window Alliance, the group behind this new campaign, there are a few things you should know about 21st century wood windows and the benefits they can bring to your home - and some of them may surprise you.

1. Appearance. Lets face it, wood windows just look good - the aesthetic appeal of this natural material, painted or stained to show the natural grain, will enhance the appearance and even the value of your home.
2. Green. Wood is the best environmental choice for windows, provided, of course that the timber is sourced from properly maintained forests. This has been endorsed by the world's leading environmental group Greenpeace
3. Low maintenance. Wood windows are easy to maintain and repair. Surprised? New manufacturing techniques mean that fully factory finished timber windows are treated and coated by super efficient spray systems. WWA windows come with guarantees of at least 8 years on paint finishes and 5 to 7 years on stains. And re-coating is just a simple rubdown and application of a single coat of paint or stain.
4. Warm. Wood is a natural insulator and wood windows can be double or even triple glazed for fantastic energy efficiency. They are available in A-C Energy Ratings to qualify for the Energy Savings Trust distinctive blue triangle.
5. Choice. Modern timber windows are available in a wide variety of opening designs, including casements, vertical sliding sash and tilt-turn from traditional small panes to large contemporary designs to suit every style of building.
6. Durable. Thirty-year guarantees on the timber, plus simple maintenance advice mean that you can be confident that your timber windows will last.

Wood Window Alliance manager Ruth Soundarajah said: "Anyone choosing windows for their home should look for the *Wood Window Alliance* heart and tree landmark on the windows they choose. This means that the windows have been independently audited and meet a set of quality standards. They meet all the relevant British Standards and UK Building Regulations for performance, wind and weather resistance, energy efficiency and have the service life warranties so you can choose timber windows with absolute confidence."

There's more information about the Wood Window Alliance, including a members directory and more guidance on choosing modern timber windows on the campaign website www.woodwindowalliance.com

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Notes to editors:

Wood Window Alliance is a new campaign to promote the environmental and quality credentials of wood as the ideal material from which to make 21st century windows. The campaign is administered by the British Woodworking Federation.

Greenpeace

In its 1997 Briefing No.1, *Installing New Windows*, Greenpeace stated: "**As long as timber is sourced from properly managed forests and care is taken in the choice of preservatives, paints and stains, timber windows are by far the best environmental choice**".

WWF

In its report *Window of Opportunity: the environmental and economic benefits of specifying timber window frames* (2005) the WWF says: "**WWF's view has always been that timber from well managed forests is a genuinely renewable resource. Specifiers who wish to ensure that they are making a sustainable or minimum impact on the environment should use timber that comes from a credibly certified source.**" In the same report, the WWF maintains that "**there are many examples of research that show timber windows to be between 14-25 per cent less expensive than PVC windows when considering the 'whole life' cost**".

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