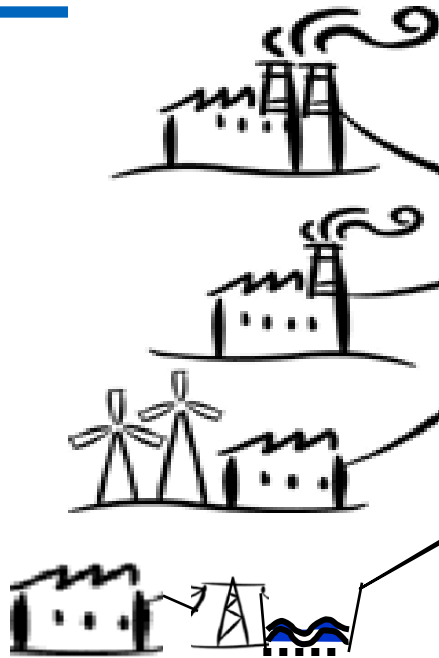

NIE Energy
Social Action Plan

Services for
vulnerable customers

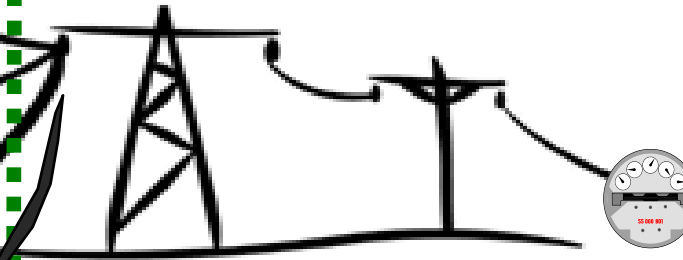
Electricity Supply Chain

Generation



Range of sources and providers operating within the Single Electricity Market (SEM)

Network & Common Services



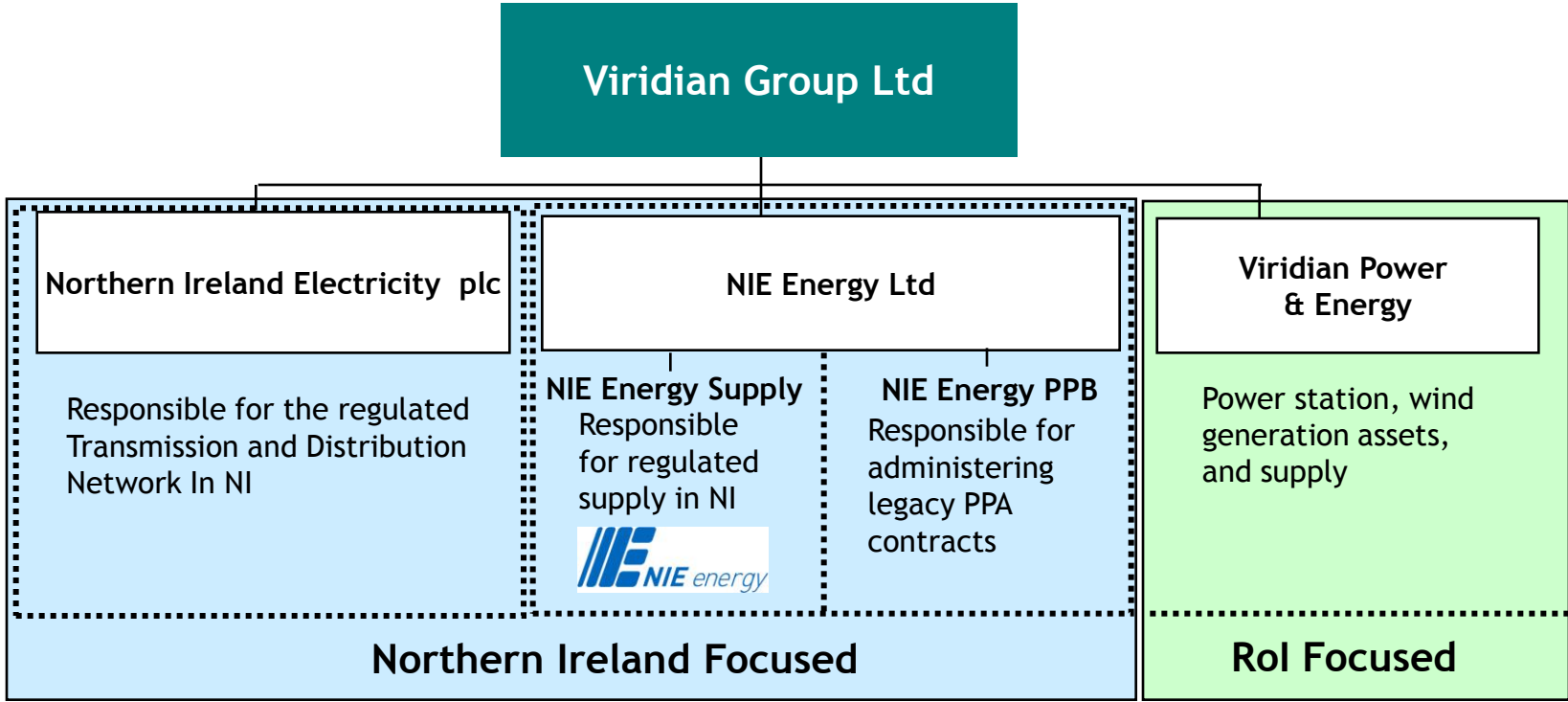
Transmission and Distribution infrastructure (including metering etc)

Supply



Electricity Retail - Market fully open to competition

Viridian Group Structure



Viridian Group does not own any generation assets in Northern Ireland



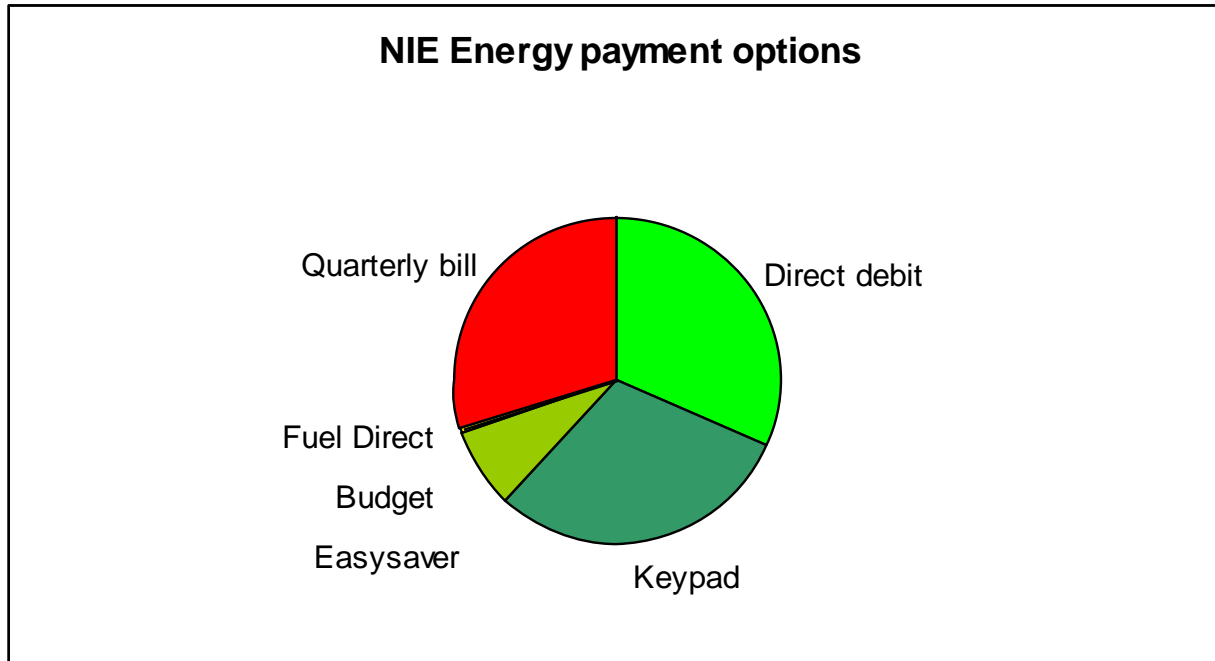
Our Business

- 790,000 customers: currently all homes and 25% businesses (by sales)
- c.60% of all domestic customers get discounted electricity
- Regulated business – operate under licence and price control
- Under current price control NIE Energy did not make a penny more profit from recent price increases

Social Action Plan

- We take our responsibilities very seriously
- Where possible, we try to ensure that all services are accessible to all customers, including those who are vulnerable
- Codes of practice – CC NI and NIAUR
- However, we don't necessarily know that customers are 'vulnerable'!

Paying for electricity



Keypad

- Pay as you go – no more bills
- Meter fitted for free
- **2.5% discount off standard rate**
(in GB, customers generally pay c£100 pa more for prepayment)
- Top-ups from from local shop or 24/7 on-line/telephone
- 224,000 households now pay this way
- Friendly credit ‘out of hours’
- Extended friendly credit option
- Provides feedback on electricity use



Paying for electricity

- Only 4% of homes in Northern Ireland use electricity for heating. The majority of homes are heated by oil and gas.
- If a customer has concerns about being able to pay their electricity bills they should contact NIE Energy straight away:
 - To discuss payment options
 - To ensure that they are receiving any discounts that may be available (for direct debit and keypad)
 - To be referred for energy saving advice
- NIE Energy does not disconnect domestic customers

Recovering previous charges

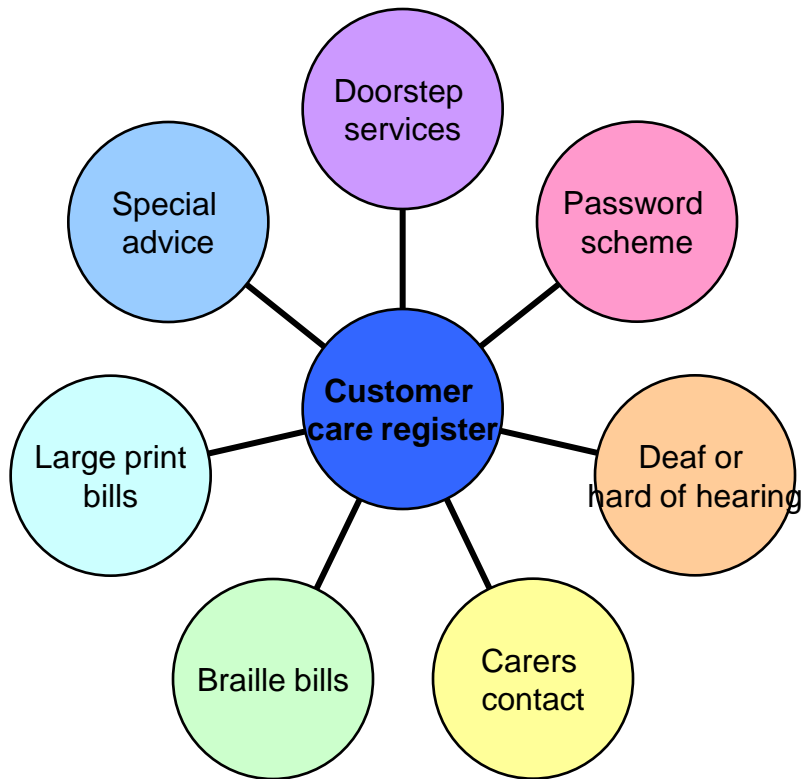
Making repayments from previous charges on a keypad meter:

- Only 4% of keypad customers are in debt
- Recovery rate set at 40%
- Can be reduced to 19% if customers are on benefits (proof required)
- Alternative rates can be arranged if working through Citizens Advice or Advice NI (proof of benefits required)



Services for vulnerable customers

Customer care register



NIE energy
in touch with you

“The password scheme gives me that extra peace of mind.”

customer care

Our Promise
Our confidential Customer Care Register makes us aware of your individual needs. If you register with us you can benefit from any of our services listed overleaf.

Customer Helpline **08457 455 455**
Lines open 8am-8pm, Monday to Friday, 9am-1pm, Saturdays. Calls recorded for quality assurance purposes.

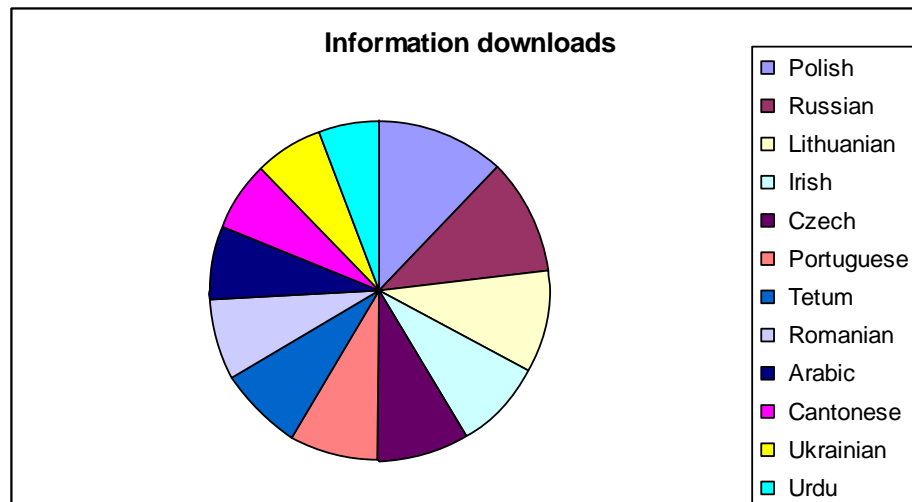
For Your Benefit programme

- £1m programme to provide entitlement checks (funded by NIE)
- Programme underway, working with CAB, Advice NI, EAGA, Barnardos, Extra Care, NIEA/Bryson, RNIB
- Range of targeting methods
- To date, 5557 BECs completed with 37% success rate
- Average weekly unclaimed benefit is £44 per week!



Minorities & ethnic groups

- Information booklet available in 11 different languages
- Launched in September 2007 with local minority & ethnic groups and employers/agencies
- 147,000 downloaded in the last year!



Energy saving help

Practical support

- NIE Energy offers fully funded energy efficiency grants:
 - To replace electric or solid fuel heating with an efficient oil or gas system
 - Cavity wall and loft insulation
- To qualify, customer must own their own home AND meet one of the requirements below:
 - Single person household with an income/pension of less than £18,000 gross OR
 - Couple or single parent family with an income/pension less than £25,000 gross OR
 - Over 70, irrespective of income



Other energy efficiency programmes

- **Hard to Treat homes** (43 homes completed to date)
- **Brighter homes** (3157 visits, 1189 BEC referrals)
- **New technology trials** eg domestic CHP, solar water heating



Energy saving advice

- EST advice centre
- Integrated into other services eg For your benefit
- Information in bills
- Events and shows eg Balmoral, advice days etc



Getting the word out...

- Information in bills, on the website etc
- Working with representative groups: eg RNIB, Macmillan, Save the Children, Barnardo, Health Action Zones, NEA, Advice NI, Citizens Advice, Lifestart, Good Morning, EST advice centre, Investing for Health Partnerships, Age Concern, Help the Aged, Bryson Charitable Group etc
- Advice days and exhibitions
- Press releases
- MLA and MP briefings
- **...your ideas would be very welcome!**