



Frequently Asked Questions

Who can join dates-n-mates?

To join dates-n-mates you must:

- be aged 18 or over
- have a learning disability

What is a learning disability?

A **learning disability** is something which significantly affects the development of your skills and your ability to understand complex information.

Dates-n-mates applies the following formal definition:

“Learning disability is assessed by a combination of intelligence tests and measures of ‘adaptive behaviour’ (ie a person’s ability to carry out everyday tasks).

In the UK, the threshold for learning disability is usually set at an IQ of below 70. ”

Dr Stuart Cumella, on behalf of learningdisability.co.uk

Autism is not classed as a learning disability on its own. Neither are things like dyslexia. These are known as a **learning difficulty** because it makes it harder to learn some things.

Some people have autism, dyslexia or a physical disability in addition to a learning disability. Because they do have a learning disability, they are eligible to become dates-n-mates members.

Can I join if I have a learning difficulty?

No. Because of how dates-n-mates is set up, you need to have a learning disability to be a member.

However, you can still come to our Open Events (like Club LATE, Valentines, Christmas parties etc) without being a member. They are open to members and non-members.

Keep an eye on this website and our social media pages for information about open events. If you would like us to tell you about upcoming Open Events by email, please contact us.

Can I bring a support worker with me to events?

Yes. Support workers are welcome to accompany you to events.

How much does it cost to become a member?

It costs £60 a year to join dates-n-mates.

You can choose whether to pay £60 up front for a year's membership or to set up a standing order and pay £5 per month through the bank.

We will be happy to talk with you about this.

What is National membership?

Dates-n-mates has branches in Renfrewshire, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Falkirk. By becoming a National member, you'll be invited to events by all 4 branches.

National membership costs £90 per year, or £7.50 per month.

When and where are your events?

Every month we arrange a programme of 8-10 different social events.

Most events change every month and take place during the afternoons and evenings. We organise lots of different activities, like days out, trips to the cinema or bowling, meals out, karaoke nights, walks in the park or going clubbing.

Events mainly take place in and around Renfrewshire and we make sure that all our venues are fully accessible.

Am I guaranteed a date?

We try to make sure our members have lots of opportunities to meet new people, make friends and find girlfriends or boyfriends, if that's what they want.

As well as social events, we also hold regular dating events where you can meet other people who are looking for a loving relationship. When you meet someone you like, we can help you set up a date and can even provide a chaperone if you would like that.

To help you build up your dating and relationship skills we offer workshops like 'What to say after hello' and 'How to have a successful date'.

However, we can't guarantee that you will immediately find a date. As they say, you have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find a Prince!

Will there be other people my age there?

Yes. And our Friendly Faces and volunteers will help you to meet people and make friends.

I am nervous about going on my own. Are people friendly?

Everyone who joins dates-n-mates wants to meet new people and make friends, so it's always a welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

Some of our more experienced members act as 'Friendly Faces' to help new members meet people. And we always have volunteers and team members at events to make sure everyone is safe and happy.

Can I try an event before I decide whether to join?

Yes. You are welcome to attend any of our Open Events as a non-member.

Does dates-n-mates organise transport to events?

No. Members must make their own travel arrangements.

However, from time to time some members may act as 'Travel Buddies' to help other members get to events. This generally means they meet at a central point and then travel to the venue together.

Does dates-n-mates provide on-going relationship support for members?

Dates-n-mates **provides opportunities** for members to meet new people, have new experiences and visit different places.

We can help put a member in touch with someone they have met at an event and help them arrange a date. We can also provide a chaperone for their first date, if they wish this.

It remains the responsibility of the member's family or support staff to provide the on-going, day-to-day support that the member may need to build or sustain friendships or close personal relationships.