

Older and disabled people will be able to use their bus passes before 9.30am, Kent County Council has announced.

The passes will be able to be used on services provided by Stagecoach, Arriva, Go Coach and Nu-Venture.

Holders of a senior citizen and disabled bus pass were previously able to travel for free on buses after 9.30am, but following discussions with these operators, this condition has been removed.

KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport Michael Payne said: "I'm very grateful to Stagecoach, Arriva, Go Coach and Nu-Venture who have worked with Kent Highways and Transport to extend the use of the bus pass on their services before 9.30am.

"This is something that will be extremely helpful during a time when some shops are opening early specifically for the older generation to support them during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

"Our public transport team is working hard to extend this to other operators in the coming days.

"This change will come into force tomorrow morning (Thursday) and I'm very happy that we have been able to support those in our community during this period of disruption."

Kent County Council has a statutory duty to provide passes for free bus travel throughout England for older and disabled people under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS).

Over 250,000 people in the county have a bus pass, with around 227,000 for older people and 22,000 for disabled people.