Citizens Advice has put out an urgent appeal for volunteers to help run its operation in Great Yarmouth.

Thousands of people each year get help and advice from the office in Stonecutters Way, but it is struggling to keep up with demand.

On some days there have been only two advisers available to handle enquiries.

And Norfolk Citizens Advice says the shortage of staff comes at a time when the problems they are being asked to help solve are becoming more complicated.

Latest figures from the charity show that 2,800 people have received advice from the Great Yarmouth office in the last 12 months, either in person or over the phone.

"A third of our clients are disabled, and a fifth of those have mental health problems," said David Potten, acting chief executive of Norfolk Citizens Advice.

"There are a great many people in Great Yarmouth who need our help. It is not only one of the most deprived areas in Norfolk but in the whole of Britain, according to all the government's deprivation indices.

"Half of all questions we deal with are related to debt. The roll-out of the Universal Credit benefit in Great Yarmouth has been a very difficult experience for many claimants. They are getting into financial trouble because they have to wait up to six weeks to receive a payment."

Last year, 100,000 people in Norfolk - one in seven of the population - turned to the Citizens Advice website to seek answers to debt, benefits, employment, consumer, housing and family questions. Many of those who go in person to the Citizens Advice office do so because they can't access the internet or because they are seeking help with more complicated problems.

The office is staffed by 15 volunteers who work one or two days a week. The number of advisers who deal with enquiries has fallen to just nine. David Potten says more volunteers are needed urgently to act as receptionists and administrators, and as advisers to help clients, either face to face or over the phone.

"We're a professional organisation and we give our volunteers a thorough training. It can be be demanding work, it can be stressful, but it is immensely rewarding knowing that you are helping people who really need that help."

Anyone who is interested in offering their time is asked to contact the Norfolk Citizens Advice volunteer recruitment administrator Emma Manser on 01603 273116 or email [v.recruitment@ncab.org.uk](mailto:v.recruitment@ncab.org.uk).