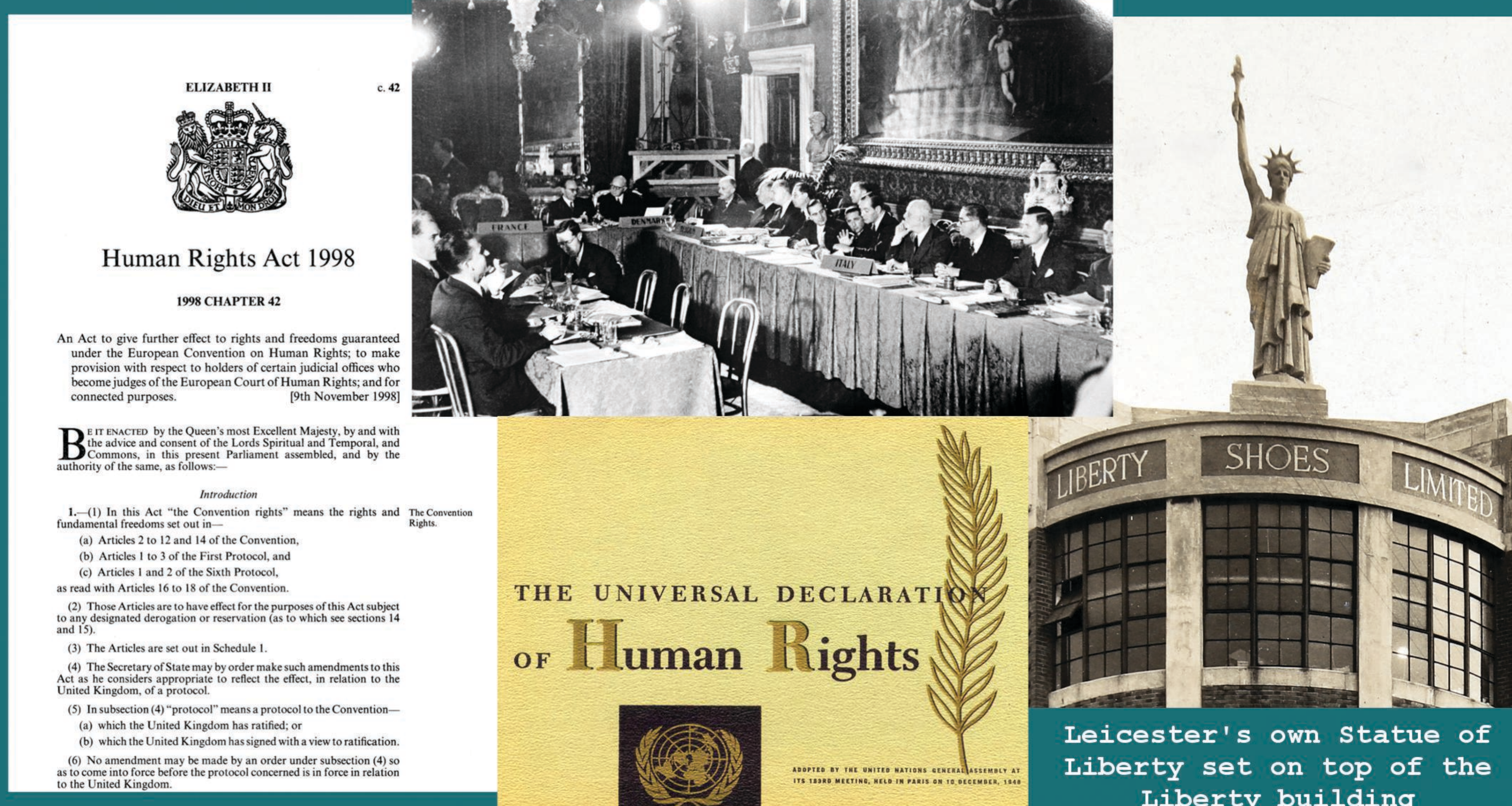


Magna Carta - 800 Years Your Rights Today

The terrible atrocities carried out by the Nazis during World War Two led to the further development of human rights. In 1948 the United Nations issued the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, a statement outlining the rights of all people in all countries. The rights outlined were adopted by the Council of Europe in 1950 as the European Convention on Human Rights. The UK were founder members of the Convention and instrumental in drafting it, although this country did not enact domestic human rights legislation until 1998.

Although human rights laws are often held up to ridicule by the media, their origins can be found in Magna Carta and they act to limit the power of the state and ensure certain rights for all people.



The rise of computing and surveillance power has led to the development of rights to privacy under Data Protection laws. These give citizens the right to know what information is collected about them, why and for how long it will be kept. Recent developments have gone even further with global search engine Google ordered to remove inaccurate or out of date information on EU citizens which has been called the 'right to be forgotten'.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 also mean that public bodies must disclose certain information upon request and within set timescales enforced by the Office of the Information Commissioner.

It is amazing to think that our rights and freedoms in the digital age draw on the 800 year old Magna Carta which still has the power to influence and fascinate us.

