

## Voltaire Society tackles climate change & the gender agenda - February 2019

In a busy first fortnight under the new co-presidents, Sam and Rory, the Voltaire Society has tackled some of the pressing questions facing society today. Their inaugural meeting welcomed guest speaker Devon Watson of the Climate Change Coalition. Formed in 2018, the coalition's membership has grown quickly and is part of an environmental network including Friends of the Earth and Beach Buddies. In a thought-provoking session, the audience debated a range of issues, including the relative merits of the government's record, the value of student activism and the potential for inter-generational violence in the future.

In keeping with their election promises, the co-presidents tried out a new format in this week's meeting. Looking at the issue of gender equality, the session ran as an open forum and considered a number of questions, including equality in the workplace, transgender rights and proposed changes to the abortion law.

Both sessions were well attended, with a very welcome increase in the number of students from Key Stage 3 and 4. The Voltaire Society, which promotes free speech on the issues of the day, is open to all students.

