

Smoking ban is snuffed out

In the blue corner

Gareth Davies

Gareth Davies, the well-regarded chief executive of Imperial Tobacco, was at a formal dinner at the Worshipful Company of Tobacco Pipe Makers and Tobacco Blenders the other day. This goes back to 1619, when it was granted a charter by King James I despite his well-known aversion to smoking as “a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose and harmful to the braine”. (He didn’t like the habit but liked the tax revenues, which shows not much has changed over the centuries.)

The Company has always observed the tradition of the Loyal Toast, after which guests can smoke. At least until the smoking ban, which found the head of our biggest cigarette company indulging his habit outside the livery company devoted to it, like any other snoutcast.

Inside, the company has found a novel way of circumventing the ban and ensuring guests can indulge, in

some form. They are each provided with a helping of snuff.

