

Black Country finally gets place on the map



Carl Chinn and Peter Mathews with the new OS map for the Black Country

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Black Country leaders will celebrate a great victory on September 11 after the area finally gained its place on the map.

The Ordnance Survey Map, that is.

The British mapping agency has been producing maps of the UK for the Government, businesses and individuals for years, but up until now the Midlands area has always been overlooked.

But things are about to change for the geographically-challenged Black Country with the launch of The Ordnance Survey Landranger 139 edition map, entitled Birmingham and the Black Country, which comes as a result of a long-standing campaign for recognition, headed by Black Country Chamber of

Commerce President Peter Mathews.

He said: "I'm surprised that it's taken us centuries to get to this point. To date, the Black Country has not been recognised properly for the contribution it has made to the UK, let alone the rest of the world, as the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and manufacturing processes.

"The new Ordnance Survey map will show a physical manifestation of the region. I am extremely proud of this team effort and I thank the Ordnance Survey for their assistance in making this map a reality."

The Black Country area is infamous locally for the residents' strong accent and dialect, but nationally most neglect to recognise that the area even exists.

As a result of the Ordnance Survey map, leaders of the Black Country hope to gain a better public image for the in-

dustrialised area and create a sense of identity for its resident and businesses.

Regional champion Professor Carl Chinn said: "It is very important for the Black Country to have been recognised by the Ordnance Survey.

"The Black Country is known for its contribution to industry and heritage and for our accent and dialect, but above all for a sense of belonging. Now, thanks to the Black Country map, the rest of the country knows where we are."

The launch of the map will be celebrated at VIP event called "Let's Celebrate Success", held at Wolverhampton Race Course on September 11.

The event itself starts at 1.00pm. The presentation of the maps will be at 4.00pm, with a Black Country Question Time followed by the award ceremony ending at 5.30pm.

Director General and CEO of the Ord-

nance Survey, Vanessa Lawrence, will hand over a framed copy of the map to the Chamber.

Professor Chinn added: "President Peter Mathews and the rest of the Black Country Chamber deserve our admiration and thanks for the commitment shown to getting this project off the ground and for bringing it to this very successful fruition.

"We need a positive image to attract investment that will provide more jobs in the region and having our area finally and firmly on the map will help us enormously.

"The whole Celebrating Success Awards event is vitally important and provides a sense of validation for the chamber members involved in commerce, enterprise and innovation - our businesses and their people are at the beating heart of our Black Country."