

There are alternatives to PFI

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The [Guardian has this morning reported](#) that PFI could eventually cost £300 billion for assets worth vastly less than that.

This is, of course, scandalous. It shows the absurdity of the state running away from its responsibilities. PFI is an indication of the existence of a cowardly state of the sort I describe in the Courageous State (see right).

And there are alternatives, of course. Many have put them forward; I will concentrate only on those I have been involved with.

In 2003 I wrote about [People's Pensions](#) Colin Hines and Alan Simpson. We argued for a real alternative to PFI, based on a completely revised pension system.

And there [are local authority bonds](#) - something Colin and I have worked on for a decade.

And there is [green quantitative easing](#).

These are real, viable, alternatives that would ensure the finance for and benefit from funding public infrastructure could be captured for widespread and public gain, at considerably lower cost.

Now is the time they were comprehensively embraced. But this week we had more conventional QE. The prospects aren't good and the Tories have nowhere to hide. They can't blame Labour when they are continuing New Labour's mistakes.

As with banking, all got this wrong. It's time now for that to be admitted and for change to happen.