Acknowledgements

The subject of this book is public–private partnerships (PPPs) and more generally relationships between public and private actors and their impact on third parties. PPPs attract passionate debates on their ability to secure public goods with private finance for long durations. While their political, social or economic stakes are abundantly discussed, there is often silence over their legal makeup, even if technical discrete issues such as public procurement have received more sustained attention. This statement prompted my curiosity and led me to embark on the doctoral research at the basis of this monograph. It mainly seeks to highlight that, although the state and (financial) industry may be the most prominent drivers of PPPs, other groups and individuals in a range of capacities – from taxpayers to service users, from patients to commuters and pupils – need to be accounted for and involved in the decision making of public actors and the implementation of the common good. In that sense, this monograph seeks to engage with researchers who also take an interest in contemporary public contracting and public resources allocation.

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As far as possible I endeavoured to integrate my colleagues’ comments and they have greatly helped to limit mistakes and misunderstandings. Remaining shortcomings would require me to take the work further with different methods. This undoubtedly applies to the further elaboration of ethic of care and a more sociological approach to community. However it is hoped that, in its present form, the research will still be useful for fostering discussions with colleagues in the United Kingdom and abroad.

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