

AN ALTERNATIVE TO BIG TECH AI · ESSAY 5 OF 7

A Village You Can Run Yourself

Stop renting a corner of someone else's platform. Run your own ground, under your own name, free to connect with others without being absorbed.

Tenants of someone else's platform

Every platform you can join is a tenancy — and the alternative isn't a better tenancy, it's your own.

- Every offer is the same shape: an account inside someone else's product, under their name.
- You can work with another group only inside the same landlord's walls.
- The alternative to a bad tenancy is to stop being a tenant.

The template, not the straitjacket

A Village starts from a template that fits your kind of body — then becomes yours.

- Types for a club, society, whānau, parish, business, board — a starting point, not a fixed product.
- The system speaks your words — parishioners, directors, members named in te reo.
- Your logo, colours, domain and mail — yours because the Village is yours, not skin-deep theming.

Your own ground

Custody is a dial you turn — up to hosting the whole Village on your own hardware.

- Shared, software-isolated infrastructure for groups with nothing sensitive.
- A dedicated database, or the entire Village on hardware you control.
- Custody scales to need; those who must run everything themselves, can.

Federation without absorption

Connect with other Villages on bilateral, consented, revocable terms — without being absorbed.

- Bilateral agreements (peer, hierarchical, consortium), sharing only what both agree to.
- Revocable with exit rights — leave, and leave with your record.
- Works across servers; guardianship (kaitiaki) travels with shared records.
- A business and its accountant: connected for the shared work, neither absorbed.

Networks, and the people who run them

An organisation can run a whole network of branded Villages — a real capability, and an invitation.

- A diocese, a federation, a cooperative can stand up branded Villages for the groups it serves.
- Governance flows down tighten-only: a parent can raise the bar, never lower it.
- Built and accredited in stages — an invitation of mutual fit, not a settled programme or an assigned seat.

A new way of seeing what a platform is for

Communities that own, brand, host and connect their own Villages — not tenants of one centre.

- Each community keeps its own record and its own name.
- Some run alone, some cluster into networks — connected without a centre to funnel through.
- Suits dioceses, iwi and hapū, cooperatives, professional bodies, regional clusters.

The point of the series, here

An AI you own needs ground you own — otherwise it's half a sovereignty, and therefore none.

- Your template, your name, your hardware if you want it, your federations on your terms.
- An AI you own sitting inside a vendor's community is only half yours.
- Not a better seat in someone else's hall — a hall of your own.

See it for yourself

- The demo Villages — mysovereignty.digital/demos.html
- The free Governance course — mysovereignty.digital/course.html
- Read the essay — agenticgovernance.digital/papers/a-village-you-can-run-yourself.html

You don't have to choose between Big Tech AI and no AI. You can hold your own.